Byzantine Hagiographical Texts as Sources on Art

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The history of Byzantine art deals with two evidently interwoven, but nevertheless distinct, phenomena: the objects of art and the impressions exercised by these objects on beholders. In their turn, the impressions of the objects can be divided into two categories: "our" impression, the perception of modern scholars (or general observers), the live and constantly changing perception, and "their" impression, the impact of the objects on their contemporaries, on the men and women of Byzantine culture. The texts giving the opinions of contemporaries, or relative contemporaries, are of two major types: those writings devoted to the description of art objects—we can use the Byzantine term for them, *ekphraseis*—and the others in which the art objects are only occasionally mentioned.

The *ekphraseis* present great difficulties of interpretation to the modern reader, on account of the rhetorical language and format in which they were written. While they often did incorporate contemporary reactions to the visual arts, and were not, as has sometimes been claimed, merely antiquarian exercises, there is no doubt that their presentation of contemporary art is obscure and indirect. On the other hand, the texts that mention art only occasionally often give us a more straightforward insight into Byzantine views on art, even though there may be *topoi* here too; the brevity of the references is compensated for by their immediacy.

Among the multifarious Byzantine texts, hagiography occupies a special place. On the one hand, it is, relatively speaking, a mass genre, represented by hundreds of works; on the other, it is a genre which was closer than any other (with the exception, probably, of popular chronicles) to the ordinary reader, which contained plenty of everyday details, and which often—although not always—stood aloof from haughty rhetorical schooling. Hagiographers, furthermore, were deeply interested in objects of art, primarily those of religious art, including church buildings, icons, holy vessels, and liturgical books.

In this article, we have tried to follow in the footsteps of previous scholars who have started to gather the bounteous data on Byzantine art that is contained in hagiographical works. We lay no claims to comprehensiveness: the tedious work of full collecting is still to be done. But, incomplete as it is, our survey introduces and categorizes information that has remained widely scattered and difficult of access, being buried within long and sometimes boring descriptions of the pious exploits of saintly lives.

I. The External Appearance of People

The authors of the saints' lives shared with the Early Christian fathers an ambivalence toward external bodily beauty. Sometimes outer comeliness was accepted as a reflection of the beauty of the soul, but on other occasions external appearance was seen to conceal inner essence, so that virtue was hidden within a rough and worn body, or, conversely, vice was masked by a specious surface attractiveness. Among those who gave a positive value to outer beauty was the hagiographer of Bishop Theodore of Edessa, who speaks of the elegance (ἀστεῖος) of a young man, whose cheeks were just blooming with down, and says that the comeliness (εὐπρεπεία) of his body makes evident

All of the references for saints' lives are given to the editions cited in the *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca* (*BHG*), 3rd. ed., ed. F. Halkin, 3 vols. (Brussels, 1957) and in the *Novum auctarium*, published in 1984. If the *BHG* lists several editions, we indicate the one we have used; only those editions absent from the *BHG* are explicitly named. In addition to the individuals named in the footnotes, the authors would like to thank the following for their assistance in the preparation of this paper: Carolyn L. Connor, Slobodan Ćurčić, Anthony Cutler, Herbert Kessler, and Nancy P. Ševčenko.

the beauty (ὡραιότης) of his soul.[1] In another life, the monk St. Sabas the Younger of Sicily is said to have a "face full of grace . . . and sweet words dripping from his lips."[2] Female saints, especially, might be praised for their physical appearance. Thomais of Lesbos was extremely beautiful, so that her inner virtues flashed through her external appearance.[3] The pious girl Hypatia-Fevronia, in the Vita of three Lesbian brothers, shone in her spiritual and physical splendor.[4] As shall be seen below, St. Barbara also was noted for her beauty. On the other hand, a passage in the Vita of Elias Speleotes distinguishes between a person's inner and external image: a monk Arsenios observed persons attending divine service, and his observations reveal two aesthetic principles of his world view. In the first place, he perceived the people in extreme categories: the faces of some of them were bright, sending forth rays, but of others gloomy and black like the outer bottom (πρόκαυμα) of a pot that has been touched by fire. Second, Arsenios said that those who earned their living in toil and drudgery had "the face of their soul shining"; by contrast, those who were adorned with white and red cloaks were full of hatred, greed, and fleshy mire inside, and were "black in the face of their souls."[5] The last observation is common and bears a certain resemblance, for instance, to Gregory of Nyssa's passage concerning the royal dignity and divine resemblance of human nature, which is revealed not by the externals of imperial costume, nor by the reds and whites used by painters to convey bodily beauty, but by virtues.[6]

Frequently in the saints' lives inner virtue is conveyed through the imagery of light. Thus beholders perceived Lazaros Galesiotes as a shining (περιφανής) and brilliant beacon sending its rays afar.[7] Gregory, the hagiographer of Basil the Younger, has an elaborate gamut to represent the brilliance of the human face. Quoting 1 Cor. 15:41, "star differs from star in brightness," Gregory asserts that at the resurrection of the dead some virtuous people will have flashingly bright faces, some will have less splendor; some will resemble the moon in the darkness of night, some red-hot irons sending out sparks, some translucent snow, and others red and white roses.[8] In all, the hagiographer finds six different "tinges" of brightness—unlike the uniformity of brightness seen by Arsenios.

Since the time of Vasari it has been traditional to think that Byzantine saints were represented as unvaryingly severe and rigid figures, yet both in art and in literature this was not the case. A distinction can be made between different categories of saints. Monks and ascetics, it is true, were given physical features which expressed their lives of self-denial. According to the Vita of the monk St. Nikon Metanoeite, the saint fasted so that his face became withered and the limbs of his body shriveled.[9] "His face," said the hagiographer, "changed due to his excessive asceticism and became emaciated."[10] His hair and beard were black and his head was squalid. He was tall in stature and generally eremitical in appearance. His clothes echoed his physical appearance, for he was clad in a tattered garment.[11] It is interesting to compare this somewhat detailed description with the surviving portrait of St. Nikon in the Katholikon at Hosios Loukas (Fig. 1).[12] The visual image does convey the quality of the literary portrait, if in a stylized manner: the face is long, the cheeks are severely sunken, and a slight disheveling of the black hair hints at the holy squalor of the saint's head. A similar dishevelment of the hair is seen in portraits of Nikon's role model, St. John the Baptist, both at Hosios Loukas (Fig. 2)[13] and elsewhere. A poem on an image of the Baptism by John Mauropous describes John the Baptist as "a man with long hair, cultivating a wild and squalid appearance . . . ,"[14] while a sermon by the south Italian

[1] *BHG* 1744, pp. 14.11–15, 18.20–23.

[2] *BHG* 1611; ed. I. Cozza-Luzi, *Historia et laudes SS. Sabae et Macarii* (Rome, 1893), p. 16.32–35: . . . πρόσωπόν τε πολλῆς χάριτος γέμον ὁρῶντες καὶ λόγους ἀπὸ χειλέων γλυκασμὸν σταζόντων ἐνωτιζόμενοι.

[3] *BHG* 2454, cols. 234B, 235E.

[4] *BHG* 494, p. 234.13–14.

[5] *BHG* 581, col. 855B.

[6] *De hominis opificio*, PG 44, col. 137A–B.

[7] *BHG* 979, col. 542A.

[8] *BHG* 263; ed. A. N. Veselovskij, "Razyskanija v oblasti russkogo duchovnogo sticha," *Sbornik Otdelenija russkogo jazyka i slovesnosti Imperatorskoj Akademii nauk* 53 (1891), supp., pp. 24.25–25.1 (hereafter *Sbornik*).

[9] *BHG* 1366; ed. D. F. Sullivan, *The Life of Saint Nikon* (Brookline, Mass., 1987), p. 44, chap. 5.61–62.

[10] Ibid., p. 74, chap. 16.7–8.

[11] Ibid., p. 154, chap. 44.25–28.

[12] E. Stikas, *To oikodomikon chronikon tes mones Hosiou Louka Phokidos* (Athens, 1970), pl. 27. On the much-debated question of the dating of the Katholikon, see, most recently, C. Connor, *The Crypt at Hosios Loukas and Its Frescoes*, Ph.D. dissertation (New York University, 1987), esp. 303–5.

[13] Stikas, op. cit., pl. 10.

[14] P. de Lagarde, ed., *Iohannis Euchaitorum metropolitae quae in codice Vaticano graeco 676 supersunt* (Göttingen, 1882), p. 3.5: Ἀνὴρ κομήτης αὐχμὸν ἄγριον τρέφων.



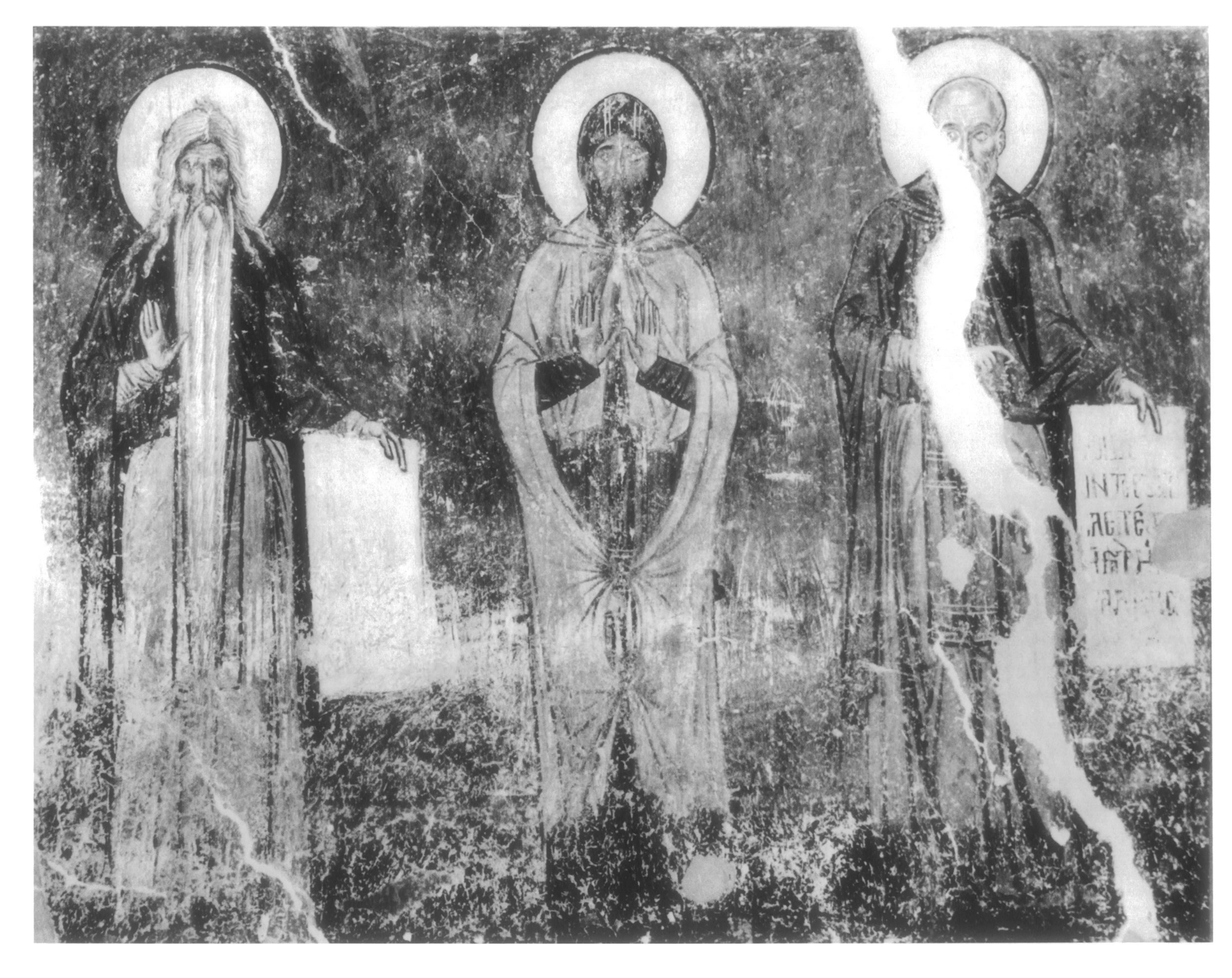
1 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, mosaic. St. Nikon (after Stikas, *To oikodomikon chronikon,* pl. 27)



3 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, mosaic. St. Demetrios (photo: Carolyn Connor)



2 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, mosaic. St. John the Baptist (photo: Carolyn Connor)



4 Nerezi, St. Panteleimon, fresco on west wall of north arm. Monastic saints (photo: Dušan Tasić)



5 Nerezi, St. Panteleimon, fresco on north wall of west arm. Military saints (photo: Dušan Tasić)



6 Asinou, Panagia Phorbiotissa, fresco.
St. Mary of Egypt (photo: Dumbarton Oaks)



7 Monagri, Panagia Amasgou, fresco, detail. St. Mary of Egypt (photo: Dumbarton Oaks)



8 Monagri, Panagia Amasgou, fresco, detail. St. Barbara (photo: Dumbarton Oaks)



9 Moutoullas, Panagia, fresco. Sts. Barbara, Marina, and Anastasia (photo: Dumbarton Oaks)



10 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, fresco.
"Our Holy Father Athanasius"
(photo: Carolyn Connor)



11 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale,
ms. gr. 923, fol. 328v.
A painter copying an icon
(photo: Bibliothèque Nationale)



12 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, mosaic.
St. Theodore the Foot Soldier
(photo: Dumbarton Oaks)



13 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, fresco. St. Theodore Stratelates (photo: Carolyn Connor)



14 Kastoria, Hagioi Anargyroi, fresco. St. Theodore Stratelates (left) and St. Theodore the Foot Soldier (right) (after Pelekanides, *Kastoria,* I, pl. 21)



15 Istanbul, Kariye Camii, fresco. St. Theodore the Foot Soldier (photo: Dumbarton Oaks)



16 Istanbul, Kariye Camii, fresco. St. Theodore Stratelates (photo: Dumbarton Oaks)



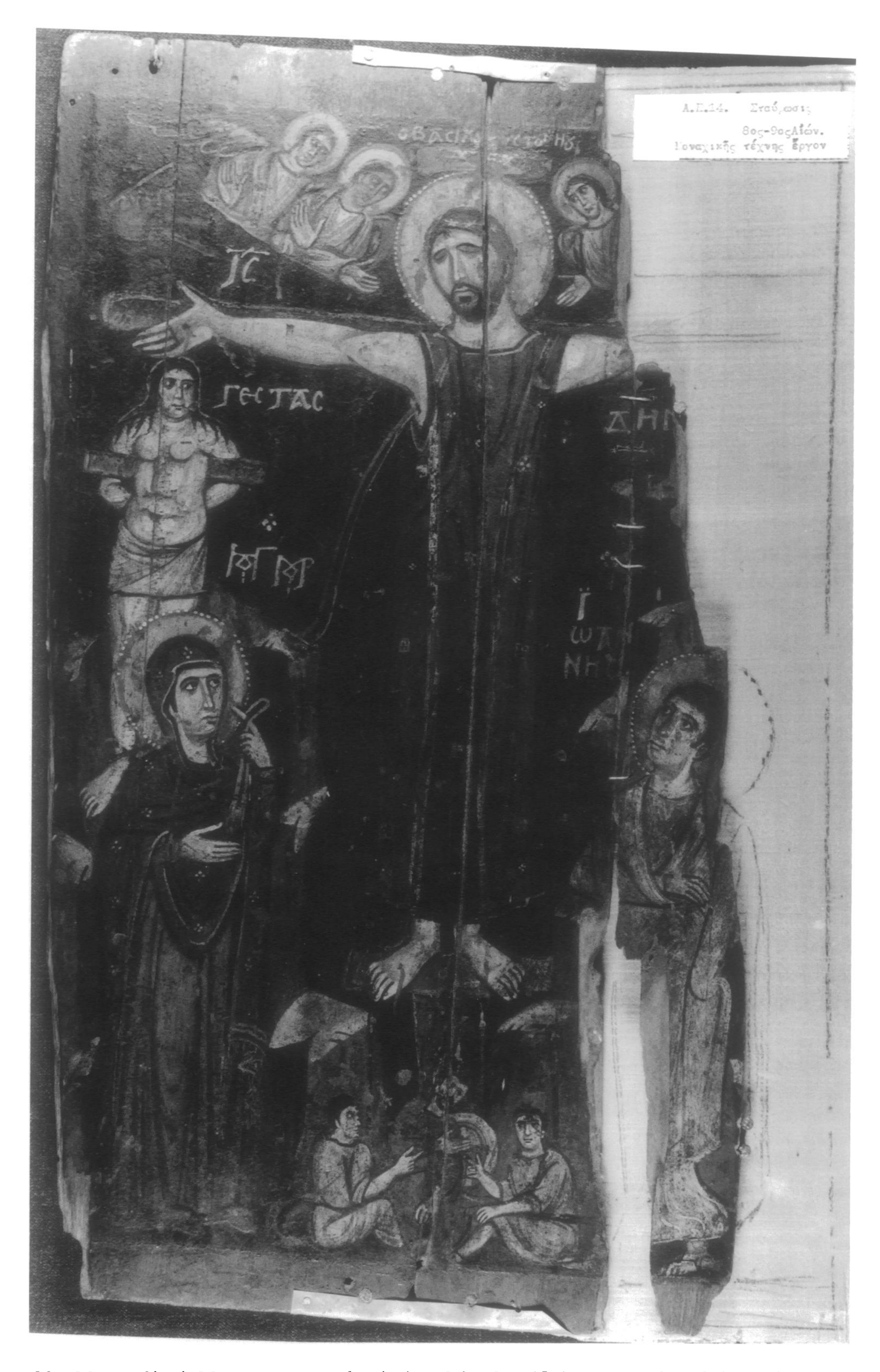
17 Hosios Loukas, mosaic. St. Theodore of Stoudios (photo: Ernst Becvar)



18 Athos, Pantocrator Monastery, ms. 61, fol. 165r.
The distinction between images commanded by God and idols (photo: Dumbarton Oaks)



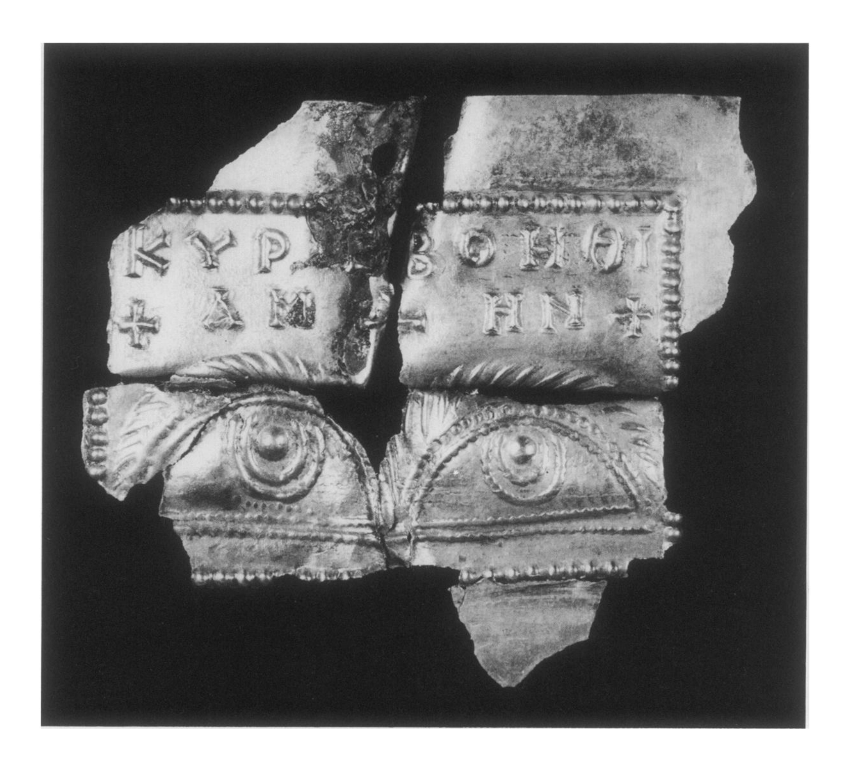
19 **Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. gr. 510, fol. 30v, detail. The Crucifixion (photo: Bibliothèque Nationale)**



20 Mount Sinai, Monastery, panel painting. The Crucifixion (reproduced through the courtesy of the Michigan-Princeton-Alexandria Expedition to Mount Sinai)



21 Moscow, History Museum, ms. 129 D, fol. 117r, detail. Idols (photo: Dumbarton Oaks)



22 Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, silver plaque from Syria (photo: Walters Art Gallery)



23 Nicaea, Koimesis Church, mosaic on pier to left of sanctuary (destroyed). Virgin and Child "Eleousa" (after Schmit, *Die Koimesis-Kirche von Nikaia,* pl. 25)

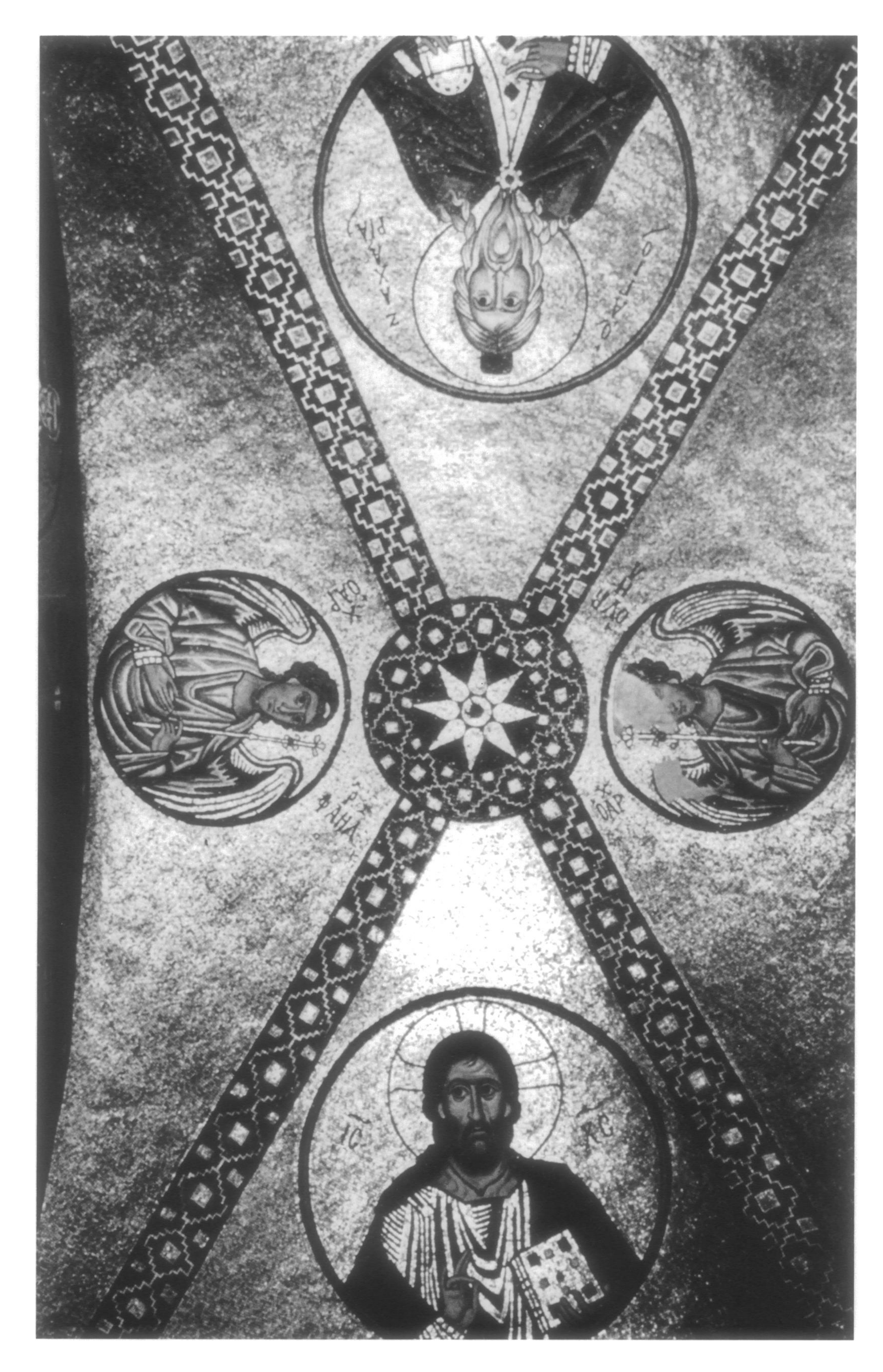


24 Nicaea, Koimesis Church, mosaic on pier to right of sanctuary (destroyed). Christ "Antiphonetes" (after Schmit, pl. 27)



25 Lagoudera, Panagia tou Arakou, fresco on pier to left of sanctuary. Virgin “Eleousa” (photo: Dumbarton Oaks)

26 Lagoudera, Panagia tou Arakou, fresco on pier to right of sanctuary. Christ “Antiphonetes” (photo: Dumbarton Oaks)



27 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, vault over south arm, mosaics.
Christ Antiphonetes, Raphael, Uriel, and St. Zacharias



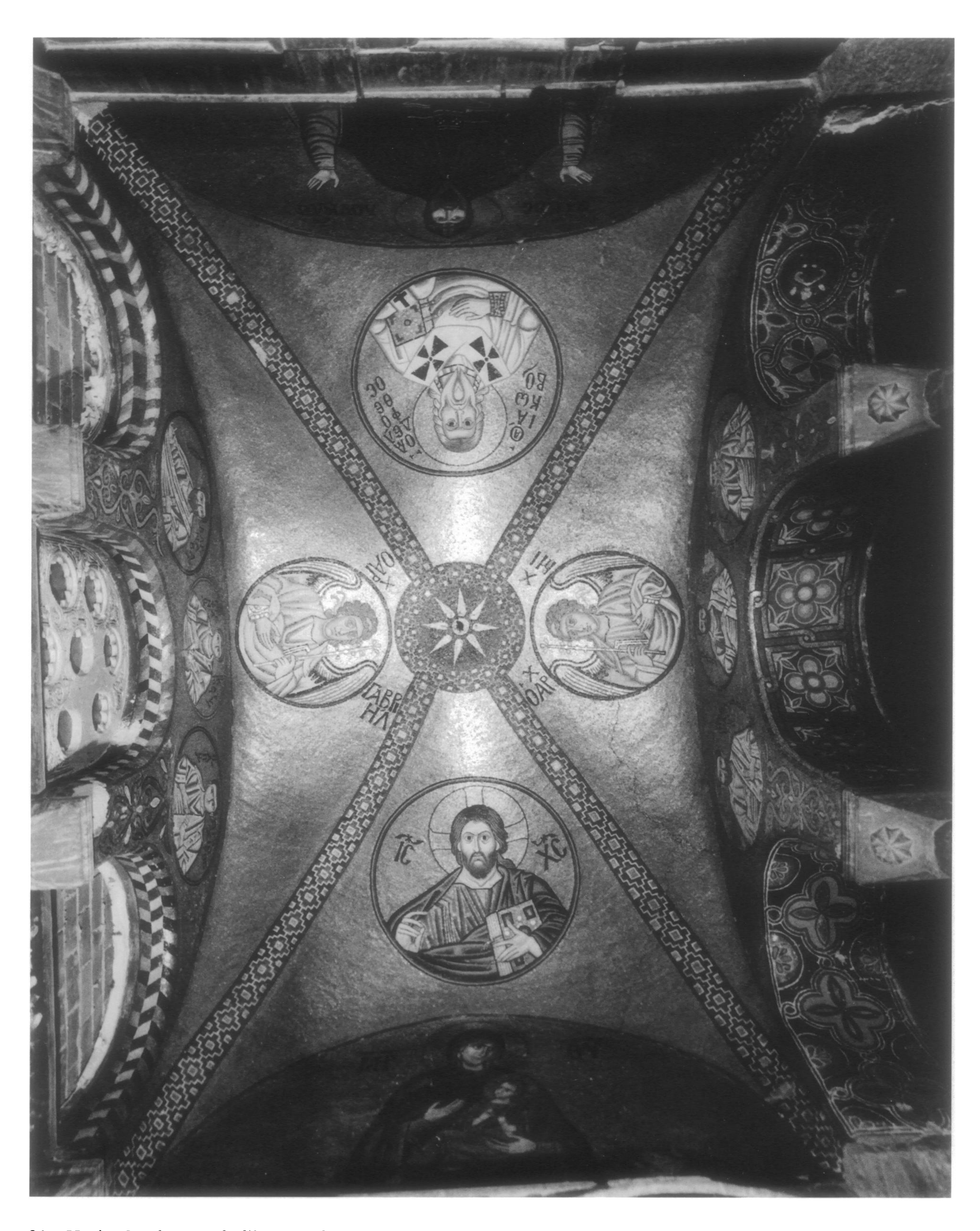
28 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, vault over south arm, east quadrant, mosaic. Christ Antiphonetes



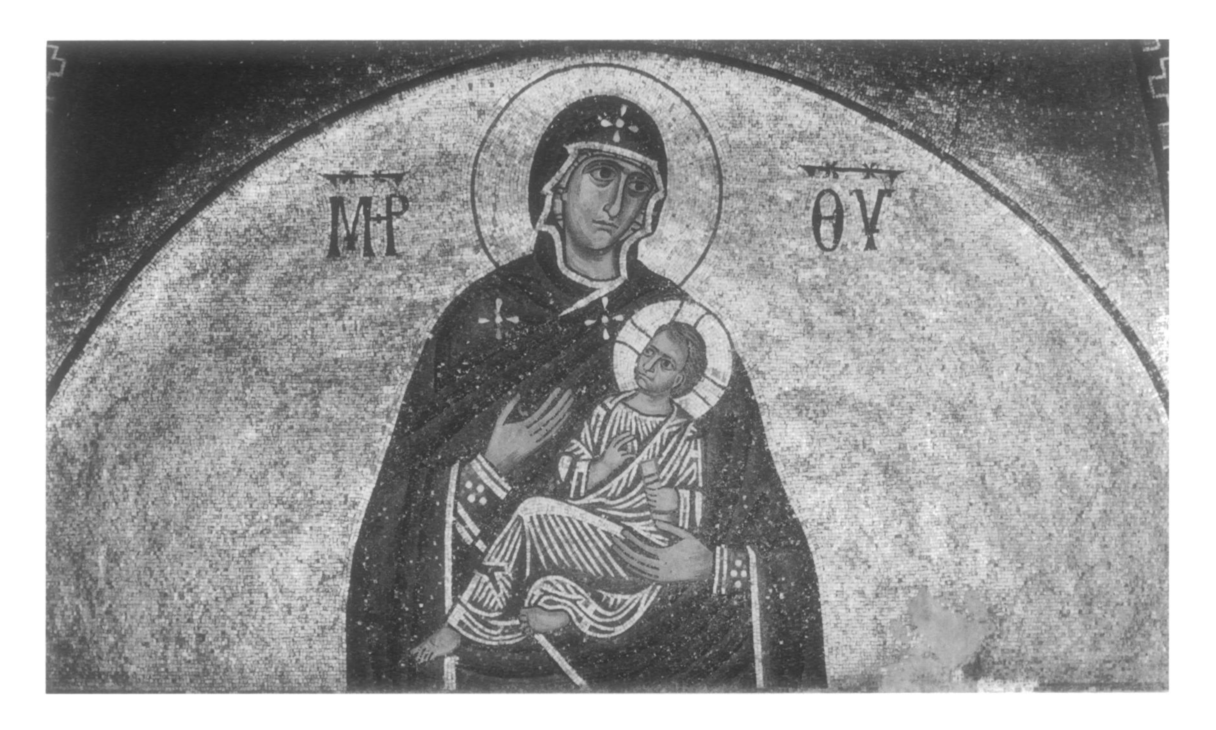
29 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, south arm, east lunette, mosaic. Virgin and Child



30 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, south arm, west lunette, mosaic. St. Panteleimon holding instruments of physical medicine



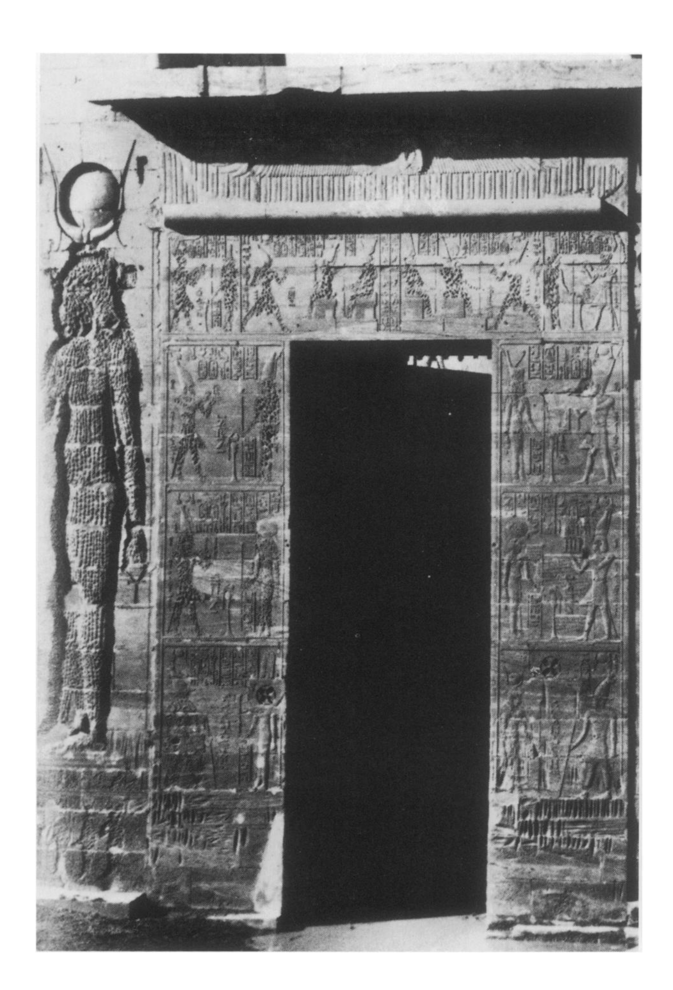
31 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, vault over north arm, mosaics. Christ, Michael, Gabriel, and James the Brother of the Lord (photo: Josephine Powell)



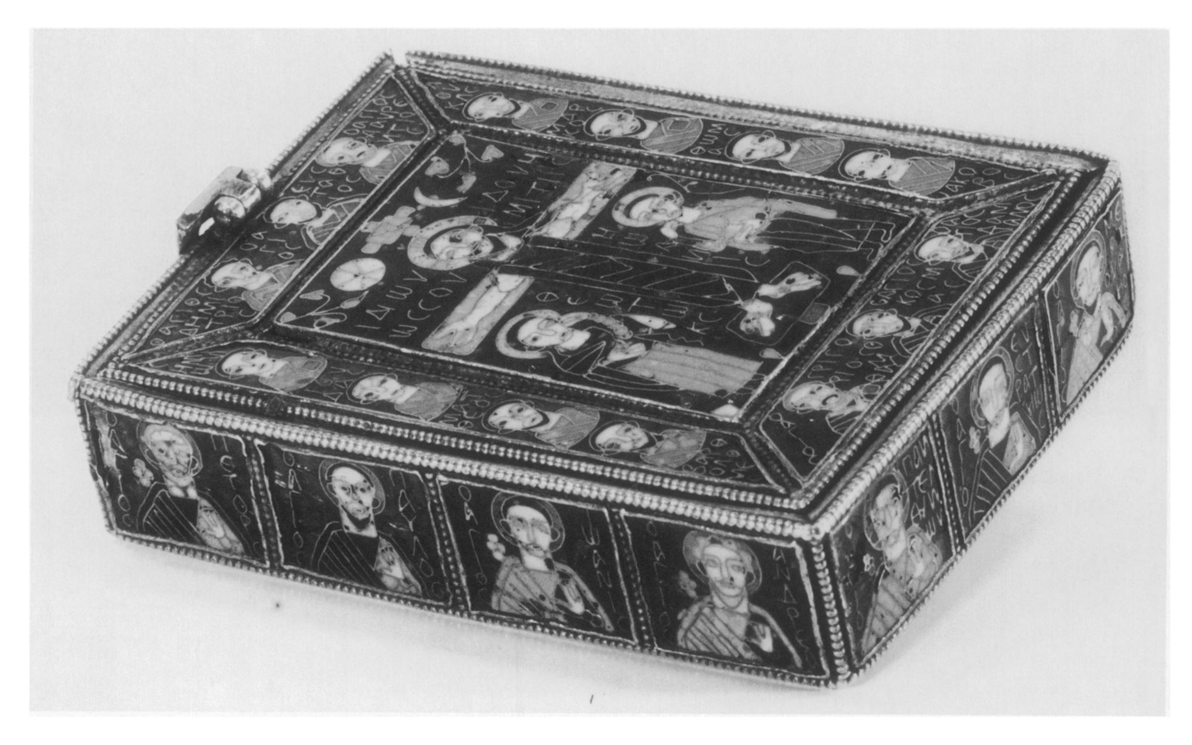
32 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, north arm, east lunette, mosaic. Virgin and Child (photo: Josephine Powell)



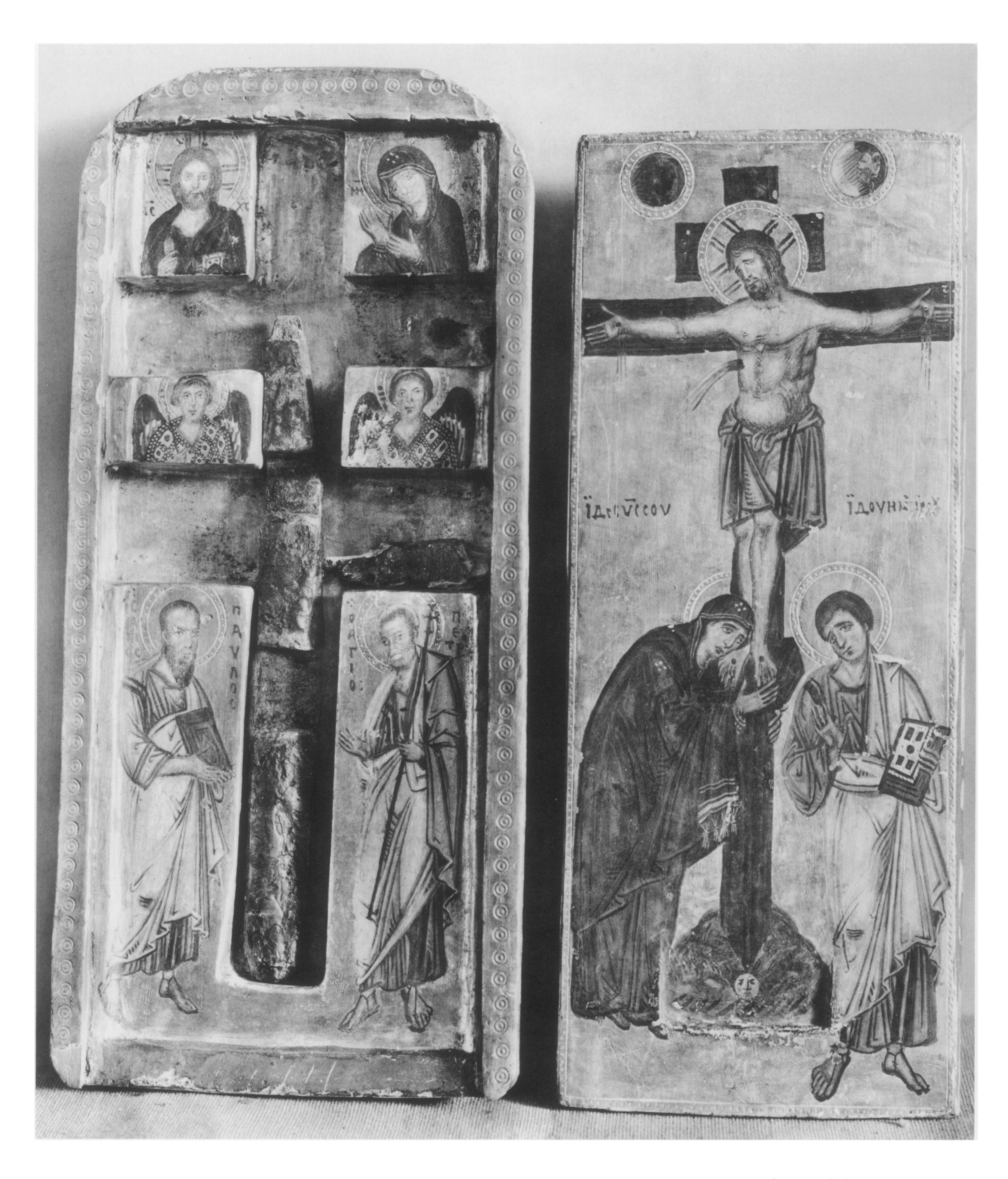
33 Hosios Loukas, Katholikon, north arm, west lunette, mosaic. St. Luke in prayer (photo: Carolyn Connor)



34 Philae, former temple of Isis, entrance of north pylon. Goddess negated by a cross (after Nautin, "La conversion du temple de Philae," fig. 3)



35 New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fieschi-Morgan reliquary. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917, inv. no. 17.190.715 (photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art)



36 Vatican, Museo Cristiano, wooden reliquary box from the Sancta Sanctorum. Crucifixion (lid); Christ, Virgin, Angels, Sts. Peter and Paul (interior) (photo: Alinari/Art Resource, New York)



37 Moscow, History Museum, ms. 129 D, fol. 51v. Nikephoros triumphs over John the Grammarian, "the Second Simon" (photo: Dumbarton Oaks)

preacher Philagathos says that "his head was squalid, filthy, and covered with flowing locks."[15]

By contrast with the ascetics, saints who assumed a military role were portrayed, both in literature and in art, as vigorous and well dressed and equipped. The Miracles of St. Demetrios, for example, refer to the saint as ruddy (πυρράκης) and well dressed, or as a ruddy and bright (λαμπρός) man, sitting on a white horse and clad in a white garment.[16] The description has Old Testament overtones (see, for instance, 1 Kings 16:12: "He was handsome with ruddy cheeks and bright eyes"), but it also compares with panegyrical descriptions of Byzantine emperors: according to Psellos, the head of Constantine IX was "brilliant as the sun and flame colored" (πυρσός),[17] while the cheeks of Alexios were described by Anna Komnena as "suffused with red."[18] The literary portrait of St. Demetrios matches his characterization in the mosaics of Hosios Loukas, where, in contrast to the ascetic portrait of St. Nikon Metanoeite, his face is round-cheeked and healthy (Fig. 3).[19]

A story in the Miracles of St. George provides interesting insights into Byzantine reactions to icons of warrior saints. According to the text, a group of Saracen soldiers were so insolent as to enter the saint's church and to drink, sleep, and play dice there. When one of their prisoners warned them that the saint knew, even then, how to repay such wickedness, the Saracens laughed and asked him to point out the saint's portrait among the holy images that were set above them in the church. Thereupon the man pointed out to them with his finger the mosaic of the martyr; the image was "girt about with brightness, wearing a military corselet and bronze leg-coverings, holding a war spear in his hand, and looking in a terrifying manner upon those who gazed straight at him." Impressive though the portrait was, it did not deter one of the Saracen soldiers from trying to hurl a missile at it, only to have the weapon returned in such a manner that it struck him in the heart. The active role of the saint in this miracle was proved by the icon itself, which was seen by the other soldiers to be stretching out its hand.[20]

This story, while it belongs to a familiar class of legends concerning images that responded to attacks by infidels or Iconoclasts, is interesting for its stress on the physically active role of the image in combatting the unbeliever: it wore its armor and carried its weapons in such a way as to look terrifying to its beholders; it even seemed to be stretching out its hand. In the portrait of a warrior saint it was appropriate to see the strength and power of the body, whereas in the image of an ascetic one would look for the wasting of the flesh. Byzantine artists responded to these distinctions between different classes of saints by varying the styles in which they were portrayed: soldiers were given a greater degree of corporality and movement in space; monks had less bodily substance and were more rigid in their poses. These distinctions of style were not absolute, but relative. That is, within the stylistic range of a given monument or work of art, some groups of saints would tend to be depicted as more corporeal, and others as less. In the frescoes painted in 1164 at Nerezi, for example, there are juxtaposed portraits of soldiers, on the north and south walls of the western arm, and of monastic saints, on the west walls of the north and south arms (Figs. 4, 5).[21] The monks are characterized by stiff, column-like postures; many of them are seen entirely frontally, and their gestures tend to be shallow and repetitive (Fig. 4). The armed warriors, by contrast, exhibit much more movement, together with a considerable degree of contrapposto. In the group illustrated in Figure 5, for example, St. Prokopios, on the left, stands in a swaying pose, with his weight balanced on his right leg, and a pronounced twist to his body, so that head and torso are facing in different directions. He holds his round shield under his left arm, in front of his chest, while he pulls his right arm back behind his body, as if to throw his spear. This figure, moving actively in space, is very different from the portraits of the monks, whose movements, both laterally and in depth, are much more severely confined.

A similar distinction, between ascetic and non-

[15] *Homilia XXXV*, 4; G. Rossi Taibbi, ed., *Filagato da Cerami: Omelie per i vangeli domenicali e le feste di tutto l'anno*, I (Palermo, 1969), p. 240: . . . αὐχμηρὰν ἔχων τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ ῥυπῶσαν καὶ καταβόστρυχον.

[16] *BHG* 513 and 520; ed. P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de Saint Démétrius*, I (Paris, 1979), pp. 157.17–18, 219.29.

[17] *Chronographia*, ed. E. Renauld, II (Paris, 1967), p. 31, chap. 126.11.

[18] Anna Komnena, *Alexiad*, ed. B. Leib, I (Paris, 1937), p. 111.6, chap. 3.2.

[19] Stikas, *To oikodomikon chronikon*, pls. 47–48.

[20] *BHG* 690i; ed. J. B. Aufhauser, *Miracula S. Georgii* (Leipzig, 1913), pp. 10–11.

[21] R. Hamann-MacLean, *Die Monumentalmalerei in Serbien und Makedonien vom 11. bis zum frühen 14. Jahrhundert*, I (Giessen, 1963), plans 6–7.

ascetic saints, is observable in the case of females. A poem attributed to Manuel Philes addresses an icon of St. Mary of Egypt with the following words: "Painter, your hand has delineated the shadow of a shadow, for the body of the Egyptian was a shadow; or rather, to put it precisely, from a shadow you have delineated material suffering."[22] A similar description of an icon of this saint is given in a poem by John Apokaukos: ". . . how is the thinness of a shadow embodied [here], being composed of condensed sinews . . . ?"[23] The painted churches of Cyprus preserve several images of St. Mary of Egypt that correspond to such literary characterizations. In each case she is exceedingly emaciated, almost skeletal in appearance, with a drawn face and matted hair: Figure 6 illustrates the fresco of 1105/6 in the Panagia Phorbiotissa at Asinou,[24] and Figure 7 a fresco in the Panagia Amasgou at Monagri, which probably dates to the first half of the fourteenth century.[25]

In contrast to these poems and images in praise of mortified flesh, the life of St. Barbara by Symeon Metaphrastes describes the saint as "exceedingly fair of face, and extraordinary for her beauty."[26] It was in such a manner that she was depicted by Byzantine artists; she appeared richly dressed, as befitted her high status, usually wearing earrings and a crown or diadem, as can be seen in the fresco at Monagri (Fig. 8),[27] which is contemporary with the portrait of Mary of Egypt in the same church. At Monagri the paint is too abraded for Barbara's facial features to be visible, but in other paintings and mosaics, such as the fresco of 1280 in the Panagia at Moutoullas, also on Cyprus, she appears with full cheeks and often with an almost round face (Fig. 9; Barbara is on the left, beside Sts. Marina and Anastasia).[28] The last feature was considered by the Byzantines to be a mark of beauty; describing the good looks of her mother Irene, Anna Komnena said: "Her face was not absolutely round, . . . but it departed only a little from a perfect circle."[29]

II. Verisimilitude

Were the portraits of saints supposed to resemble their originals? To many modern eyes Byzantine painting appears so standardized, so deprived of individuality, that the question itself seems purposeless. But, strange as it might seem, the Byzantines had no trouble in recognizing a strong resemblance between the portrait and the portrayed.[30] Leaving aside the plentiful evidence of secular writers concerning the use of portraits for the practical aim of acquainting the bridegroom with his future spouse, we will restrict ourselves here to hagiographical sources and their concern with the original—portrait resemblance.

The references to portraiture in the saints' lives can be divided into two classes: portraits of contemporaries, or near contemporaries, which could still be verified against the subject, or against recent memories of the subject, and portraits of historical personages who had been long dead. A reference of the first type is contained in the Vita of Athanasios of Athos: Kosmas, the one-time sacristan of the Lavra of Athanasios, saw the portrait of his former hegoumenos and immediately acknowledged its great degree of likeness (πρὸς τὸ ὁμοιότατον ἀκριβῶς ἐξειργασμένον) with the original.[31] This passage is well known,[32] and, as in the case of St. Nikon Metanoeite, it is possible to relate it to a contemporary, or nearly contemporary, portrait

[22] Manuel Philes, *Carmina,* I, ed. E. Miller (Paris, 1855), p. 36, no. 80:
Σκιὰν σκιᾶς ἔγραψας, ὦ χεὶρ ζωγράφου.
Σκιὰ γὰρ ἦν τὸ σῶμα τῆς Αἰγυπτίας·
Ἢ μᾶλλον ὡς ἂν ἀκριβώσω τὸν λόγον,
Ἀπὸ σκιᾶς ἔγραψας ὑλικὸν πάθος.

[23] A. Papadopoulos Kerameus, ed., "Epigrammata Ioannou tou Apokaukou," *Athena* 15 (1903), pp. 476–77, no. 15.16–17: πῶς σωματοῦται τῆς σκιᾶς ἡ λεπτότης,/εἰς νεῦρα καὶ σύμπηξιν ὀργανουμένη.

[24] A. and J. A. Stylianou, *The Painted Churches of Cyprus* (London, 1985), 119, fig. 59.

[25] S. Boyd, "The Church of the Panagia Amasgou, Monagri, Cyprus, and Its Wallpaintings," *DOP* 28 (1974), 277–328, esp. 323–24, fig. 56.

[26] *BHG* 216, col. 304A.

[27] Boyd, op. cit., 325–26, fig. 64.

[28] K. Weitzmann, "Icon Painting in the Crusader Kingdom," *DOP* 20 (1966), 51–83, esp. 71, fig. 47 (repr. in idem, *Studies in the Arts at Sinai* [Princeton, 1982], 325–57); Stylianou, *Painted Churches,* 328; D. Mouriki, "The Wall Paintings of the Church of the Panagia at Moutoullas," *Byzanz und der Westen,* ed. I. Hutter (Vienna, 1984), 171–213, esp. 197, fig. 25.

[29] *Alexiad,* ed. Leib, I, pp. 111.29–112.1, chap. 3.3. On the Byzantine literary portrait, see Ja. Ljubarskij, *Mikhail Psell: Ličnost' i tvorčestvo* (Moscow, 1978), 230–42.

[30] On this point, see G. Dagron, "Le culte des images dans le monde byzantin," *Histoire vécue du peuple chrétien,* ed. J. Delumeau, I (Toulouse, 1979), 133–60, esp. 144–49 (repr. in Dagron, *La romanité chrétienne en Orient* [London, 1984], no. 11), and R. Grigg, "Byzantine Credulity as an Impediment to Antiquarianism," *Gesta* 26 (1987), 3–9, esp. 3–4. Both authors cite some of the same texts that will be discussed here.

[31] *BHG* 187; ed. J. Noret, *Vitae duae antiquae S. Athanasii* (Brussels, 1982), par. 254.7–9.

[32] See, among others, I. Ševčenko, "On Pantoleon the Painter," *JÖB* 21 (1972), 241–49, esp. 244–45 (repr. in idem, *Ideology, Letters and Culture in the Byzantine World* [London, 1982], no. XII); Grigg, "Byzantine Credulity," 3.

similar to the one that Kosmas may have seen. Among the frescoes in the crypt of the Katholikon of Hosios Loukas is a bust in a medallion labeled "Our Holy Father Athanasios" (Fig. 10); while the identification is disputed, there are reasons for believing that this individual is indeed the abbot of the Grand Laura.[33]

In the case of St. Athanasios there was a straightforward recognition of the icon by someone who knew the person portrayed. More often, however, dreams or visions were involved. Either someone had a dream of the saint and subsequently recognized him or her in an icon, or else someone saw the icon first, and then recognized the saint in a dream. A legend of the first variety is found in the Vita of Irene, abbess of Chrysobalanton. One night Emperor Basil I had a vision of St. Irene who three times announced her name; in the morning, he immediately dispatched the protovestiarios, the sakellarios, and other high-ranking officials to the nunnery of Chrysobalanton. In the retinue was also a *zōgraphos* assigned to paint Irene's icon (πρόσωπον εἰκονισθέν). The emperor's envoys managed to engage the abbess in conversation for a sufficient length of time to enable the painter to produce an accurate likeness of her. When the portrait was brought to the emperor he was frightened by the resemblance of the icon to the woman of his vision.[34] A story of the second type, in which the seeing of the icon precedes the vision, is told by Gregory, the early tenth-century author of the Translation of St. Theodora of Thessaloniki. He records that a girl had a vision of two ladies, and one of them she recognized as Theodora, since the woman resembled the image (μορφή) of an icon from which myrrh-fragrant oil was gushing.[35]

In several stories the saint has to appear in a vision to the artist, so that the icon can be made; as the story of Irene of Chrysobalanton has demonstrated, a "sitter" was required in order to create a portrait, and if there was no sitter, a miracle was necessary to make good the absence.[35a] The story of the portrait of Nikon Metanoeite is a well-known example of this type. It has already been cited above, but it is so important that we shall relate it more fully here. After Nikon's death, says the hagiographer, John Malakenos invited a dexterous (ἀριστόχειρ) artist, described to him Nikon's appearance (μορφή), that is, his stature, hair, and dress, and ordered the painter to produce on a board a likeness (ἐμφέρεια) of the saint. The artist went home and began working but was unable to paint. He could not, comments the hagiographer, recreate the precise similarity of the man whom he had never seen, although he possessed the utmost skill in his profession. Only when a monk entered his house and claimed a perfect similarity to Nikon did the artist rush to the board to execute the painting, only to find the holy appearance (μορφή) automatically formed (literally, impressed: ἐκτυπωθεῖσα) there. When he wanted to look once more on the monk, the apparition disappeared. Naturally, the portrait that he brought to Malakenos bore a striking similarity to the saint's features.[36] This story, of course, intentionally echoes the creation of the holiest of the miraculously produced icons, the mandilion of Christ, which is referred to in the account of its translation from Edessa to Constantinople in 944 as an "image" or "impression" (ἐκτύπωμα).[37]

Another, less well-known story of a miraculous sitter concerns St. Maria the Younger. After her demise, she appeared in a vision to a painter, who lived as a recluse in Rhaidesto (Thrace), and ordered him to paint her icon, "as you see me now." She required the artist to represent her on the icon accompanied by her two boys and her maidservant Agathe. The old painter produced Maria's image, "as he has seen her in his dream," and sent it to the town of Vize. Those inhabitants of Vize who had

[33] M. Chatzidakis, "À propos de la date et du fondateur de Saint-Luc," *CahArch* 19 (1969), 127–50, esp. 140–44, identifies the portrait as an unknown abbot of Hosios Loukas; Connor, *The Crypt at Hosios Loukas,* 161–63, 222, argues for Athanasios of Athos. Later portraits of St. Athanasios of Athos are discussed by G. Galavaris, "The Portraits of St. Athanasius of Athos," *ByzSt* 5 (1978), 96–124.

[34] *BHG* 952; ed. J. O. Rosenquist (Uppsala, 1986), pp. 90.20–22, 92.24–28, 96.14–30.

[35] *BHG* 1739, p. 47.29–31. Ch. Bakirtzis has identified this image with a painted marble relief icon now in the Byzantine Museum at Athens: "Marmarine eikona tes Hagias Theodoras," *Hellenika* 39 (1988), 158–63, fig. 1.

[35a] In the Life of Theodore of Sykeon, it is related that an artist was invited by the monks of the monastery of St. Stephen of Rhomaioi in Constantinople to paint the saint's portrait so that they could set it up in their monastery for his memory and their benediction. The painter had to resort to observing the saint surreptitiously through a small hole in order to capture his likeness (τὸ εἶδος τοῦ προσώπου) without being observed. Later, when the saint was asked to bless the portrait, he did so, but accused the painter of theft. *BHG* 1748; ed. Festugière, I, par. 139.1–10; see R. Cormack, *Writing in Gold: Byzantine Society and Its Icons* (London, 1985), 39.

[36] *BHG* 1366; ed. Sullivan (above, note 9), pp. 152–56, chap. 44.12–55.

[37] *Narratio de imagine Edessena,* 1; PG 113, col. 424A. See *Image et signification: Rencontres de l'École du Louvre* (Paris, 1983), 309 (commentary on Christoph von Schönborn, "Les icônes qui ne sont pas faites de main d'homme").

seen Maria alive were amazed by the icon's likeness to the woman they had known.[38]

Finally, the Life of Theodora of Thessaloniki tells a detailed story about the creation of an icon of the saint, which may be the same image that featured in the legend related above. There was a *zōgraphos* John who never had a chance to see Theodora "in the flesh," nor had he visited her convent. But after her death he had a vision: he saw himself lying in the narthex of the church in which Theodora's tomb was installed. In the morning he walked to the convent, and as soon as he crossed the threshold of the narthex he understood that this was the setting he had seen in his dream. That night he dreamt that he was sketching the icon of a nun whose name he did not know. The dream was repeated, whereupon the painter returned to the convent and started painting the icon of St. Theodora, and even though he swore by oath that he had never seen her, "and had asked no one about her height, the nature of her complexion, or the appearance of her features," yet everybody who knew her asserted that the saint had the same appearance (μορφή) when she was younger. After a time, myrrh flowed from the right palm of this image, in such quantities as "to wash off its paintwork."[39]

Thus, similarity to the archetype was a principle required by Byzantine aesthetics. In the stories cited above, the saints could be painted by contemporary artists and recognized by those who knew them in life; but the Virgin, the apostles, and other long-departed saints were divided from Byzantine painters by a significant period of time, and their icons could be made only on the basis of earlier images. Yet the concept of resemblance was applied even to their portraits; the legends constantly lay stress on the accuracy of the portraits. "Such was this well-renowned father," wrote an encomiast of St. Peter's disciple, St. Marcianus of Syracuse, "as is conveyed by the appearance of his countenance on his icon."[40] A hagiographer of the apostle Andrew tells us that a church was built to the saint in the emporion Charax (region of Pontus) by local inhabitants; there, near the cross, they made an icon of Andrew that "resembled" the apostle "in all respects." The writer adds: "It was painted in full truth (πιστῶς) on a wall."[41] Many stories about miracle-working were linked to this icon.

The most authentic likenesses, of course, were the images "not made by hands." On occasion, these *acheiropoiētoi* could be miraculously copied, just as the originals themselves were miraculous copies of the prototype. Paul of Latros wanted to make a copy of Christ's not-made-by-hands icon, the holy mandilion. A miracle came to his help: a piece of linen the same size as the mandilion was applied to the icon, and immediately it caught the impression, becoming, as the hagiographer puts it, "a *typos* of the *typos*."[42] More often, however, it was necessary to copy each icon laboriously from an earlier one, as can be seen in Figure 11, a miniature from a manuscript of the Sacra Parallela in Paris (ms. gr. 923, fol. 328v),[43] which illustrates a passage from a letter by Basil of Caesarea: ". . . painters when they paint icons from icons, looking closely at the model, are eager to transfer the character of the icon to their own masterpiece."[44] During this process inaccuracies could be introduced. In the Homily on Gordios, Basil of Caesarea himself complained that artists, while copying (μεταγράφωσι) icons from icons, usually departed from the archetype.[45] However, visions could play a useful role in authenticating the veracity of icons portraying historical saints. Thus the hagiographer of Stephen the Younger gives a brief description of the icon of the Virgin that was in the church of the Blachernae, saying that the mother of God was represented there holding the Son in her arms. In a vision to the mother of St. Stephen, says the hagiographer, the Virgin appeared similar to the icon he has just described.[46] For the concept of similarity he employs the word ὁμοιοπλάστως, not used in antiquity and known to Lampe from this passage only. It is significant that the Iconodules needed a special term to express the notion of "iconic resemblance." In the version of Metaphrastes the episode is contracted, the description of the icon is omitted, and, not pointing out the resemblance of the two images, the learned ha-

[38] *BHG* 1164, 699BC. See now S. Kissas, "Ho Bios tes Hagias Marias tes Neas hos pege gia ten archaiologia kai historia tes technes," *ByzF* 14.1 (= *First International Symposium for Thracian Studies: Byzantine Thrace, Image and Character*, ed. Ch. Bakirtzis, [Amsterdam, 1989]), 253–64, esp. 258.

[39] *BHG* 1737, pp. 31–32; cf. *BHG* 1738, pp. 32–33.

[40] *BHG* 1030, col. 277C.

[41] *BHG* 100, p. 330.8–13.

[42] *BHG* 1474; ed. *AnalBoll* 11 (1892), 150.18–151.6.

[43] K. Weitzmann, *The Miniatures of the Sacra Parallela* (Princeton, 1979), 213, pl. 126, fig. 569.

[44] Basil of Caesarea, *Epistles*, PG 96, col. 352B: Ὥσπερ οἱ ζωγράφοι, ὅταν ἀπὸ εἰκόνων εἰκόνας γράφωσιν, πυκνὰ πρὸς τὸ παράδειγμα βλέποντες, τῶν εἰκόνων τῶν ἐκείνων χαρακτῆρα πρὸς τὸ ἑαυτῷ σπουδάζουσιν μεταθεῖναι φιλοτέχνημα.

[45] *BHG* 703; ed. PG 31, col. 493A.

[46] *BHG* 1666, col. 1076BD.

giographer of the tenth century is satisfied with a standardized formula that the woman of the vision possessed "ineffable and unspeakable beauty."[47]

If it was possible for a vision to support an icon of a long-dead saint, an icon could also support a vision. Thus the Vita of Pope Sylvester, and various legends depending upon it, tell the story of Constantine the Great who had a vision of the apostles Peter and Paul persuading him to convert to Christianity; when thereafter he was shown the icons of the apostles he forthwith acknowledged in the portraits the men of his vision.[48] In the Miracles of St. Artemios we are told of a twelve-year old girl, Euphemia, who had a vision of the saint in which he appeared "the same as the icon" (ὅμοιος ἦν τῆς ἑστώσης εἰκόνος) on the lefthand side of the templon in the church containing his relics. She also saw angels resembling those portrayed flanking Christ on another icon in the same church (ἐν εἰκόνι γεγραμμένους ἀγγέλους).[49]

Archbishop John in his Miracles of St. Demetrios speaks at least three times about the resemblance of the saint's icons to his appearance as revealed in visions. He tells us that Demetrios appeared on a bright day to the naukleros Stephen, adding: "in the same *schēma* he has been represented on icons."[50] Another man saw Demetrios sitting on the bishop's throne "in the same *schēma* as it is represented on icons."[51] Lemerle translates the word σχῆμα as costume,[52] but probably a more general word such as "appearance" would suit the sense better. At any rate, in the third case, John underscores specifically that the portrait resemblance referred to the image, not the dress, of the saint: a certain man of high birth, an *illoustrios,* saw Demetrios' "angel-like face"; it was the appearance (ἰδέα) that one might behold represented on ancient icons. The only concrete detail that John gives of this angel-like face is its brightness: "the color of his face sent forth the lustre of sun rays."[53]

The repeated statements in contemporary sources about the verisimilitude of Byzantine paintings have puzzled many modern observers, who have seen Byzantine painting as lacking in naturalism. Two explanations can be offered for this difference between twentieth-century perceptions of Byzantine portraiture and contemporary reactions. The first explanation, which has already been suggested by several scholars, is that the Byzantines, not being used to photography, or indeed to the more illusionistic art developed during the Renaissance, had lower expectations than modern viewers.[54] They were more easily satisfied by a more schematic image—much as black and white photography was accepted before the invention of color films. The second explanation is tied to the first: for the very reason that the Byzantines were used to a narrower range of possibilities (a more restricted semantic field), they were more alert than the modern observer to small distinctions and nuances within their art. Where a present-day viewer sees only uniformity and a lack of differentiation, the Byzantine viewer could see variety.

We have already seen how Byzantine artists distinguished between classes of saints (monks and soldiers) with respect to the styles in which they were painted. For the better known saints they also developed conventions of portraiture, by which individual saints could be recognized through precise visual signs. There had always been established and well-known portrait types for the major apostles, such as Peter, Paul, and Andrew, mentioned in the stories above. But, particularly after the tenth century, Byzantine artists introduced, or reintroduced, portrait types for many lesser saints;[55] while it may be easy for modern viewers to overlook these likenesses, Byzantine worshipers must have been expected to recognize them. An interesting story, in this regard, is related in a sermon on the Annunciation by Leo, the mid-ninth-century archbishop of Thessaloniki. Leo tells of a young Jewish woman to whom the Virgin and St. Demetrios appeared at night. Subsequently, she saw various images in a baptistery, and was immediately able to pick out from the others the icons

[47] *BHG* 1667; ed. F. Iadevaia, *Vita di S. Stefano Minore* (Messina, 1984), p. 69.60–73.

[48] A. Kazhdan, "Constantin imaginaire," *Byzantion* 57 (1987), 196–250, esp. 231 f.

[49] *BHG* 173; ed. A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Varia graeca sacra*, p. 53.23–28. The passage is discussed by C. Mango, "On the History of the *Templon* and the Martyrion of St. Artemios at Constantinople," *Zograf* 10 (1979), 40–43, esp. 43.

[50] *BHG* 507; ed. Lemerle, I, p. 102.7–9. For a discussion of the *Miracles* in relation to art, see Cormack, *Writing in Gold,* 60–94.

[51] *BHG* 509; ed. Lemerle, I, p. 115.16–17: καὶ τὸν πανένδοξον ἀθλοφόρον τοῦ Χριστοῦ Δημήτριον ἐφεζόμενον οὕτως ὁποίῳ σχήματι κατὰ τὰς εἰκόνας ἐγγράφεται.

[52] Ibid., 111.

[53] *BHG* 514; ed. Lemerle, I, p. 162.16–18.

[54] On the "horizon of expectation" in Byzantine art, see most recently Grigg, "Byzantine Credulity" (above, note 30), esp. p. 4.

[55] H. Buchthal, "Some Notes on Byzantine Hagiographical Portraiture," *GBA* 62 (1963), 81–90. The Byzantines seem to have been much more concerned with defining portrait types of saints than for Old Testament figures such as prophets, where there was little consistency; see J. Lowden, *Illuminated Prophet Books* (University Park, Pa., 1988), 51, 55–61.

of the two saints, on account of their "distinct characteristics."[56]

How subtle the characteristics of the individual saints could be is illustrated by the two Saints Theodore. Each soldier has a long face with full, curly hair and a long, pointed beard (Figs. 5, 12–16). At first sight they appear similar. Closer inspection, however, reveals a consistent set of features differentiating between the two men.[57] The foot soldier has a somewhat longer face than the general; his beard is thicker and longer; and his hair is shorter, so that his ears are completely visible. These facial characteristics enable the saints to be clearly distinguished from each other in paintings and mosaics executed at different periods and in different styles, whether it is the relatively abstract rendering of Hosios Loukas (Figs. 12, 13),[58] the late Comnenian mannerism of Nerezi (Fig. 5) and the Hagioi Anargyroi at Kastoria (Fig. 14),[59] or the more classical art of the painter at the Kariye Camii (Figs. 15, 16).[60] The legend of the Life of St. Theodore the Foot Soldier shows a concern for the precise delineation of his features, in telling how Eusebia, his benefactress, decided to obtain his icon after his death. She visited an artist (γραφεύς) and described to him the *schēma* and face of the late saint. Soon thereafter the saint himself appeared to the artist in a vision as a soldier returning from a long expedition, and ordered the man to paint him "with precision" (ἀκριβῶς). When the portrait was finished, the "sitter" disappeared, and, of course, when Eusebia saw it she recognized Theodore.[61]

The physiognomic characteristics of individual saints, which were listed in post-Byzantine painters' guides, such as the *Hermēneia* of Dionysios of Phourna, were occasionally recorded by hagiographers. The Life of Theodore of Stoudios attributed to his disciple Michael has one of the fuller descriptions: the saint was seen in a vision to be tall, sere, and pale in face, with grizzled hair and a balding head.[62] Another version of the same vita adds that this was the saint's appearance in life.[63] As Doula Mouriki has shown, this portrait type, though schematic, was followed more or less faithfully by artists working in different styles, from the eleventh century to the post-Byzantine period (Fig. 17).[64]

It was in physiognomic details, then, rather than in illusionistic modeling and perspective, that the "realism" of Byzantine portraiture resided for contemporary viewers.[65] This distinction is made clear by the story of St. Nikon Metanoeite. As we have seen, the vita makes an implied comparison between the image of the saint that was miraculously conveyed to the panel and the mandilion of Christ, which, according to the account of its translation in 944, was an image "without coloring or painter's art."[66] Nikon's miraculous image is described as a "formed likeness" (ἐκτυπωθεῖσα ἐμφέρεια), to which the painter "added the remaining colors" in order to finish the icon.[67] Other descriptions in the saints' lives of painters at work allow us to interpret this "formed likeness" as the preliminary drawing, or sketch, to which the colors were later applied by the artist. Andrew of Crete, for example, in his enkomion of Patapios says that painters skillfully color "the underlying shadowy outline" (τὸ ὑποκείμενον ἀποσκίασμα) with paints, putting on variegated colors so that the figures emerge alive and clear.[68] Thus, in the story of the icon of St. Nikon Metanoeite, the essential part of the portrait, the one that had to be miraculously transferred before the painter could proceed, was the drawn outline,

[56] V. Laurent, "Une homélie inédite de l'archevêque de Thessalonique Léon le Philosophe sur l'Annonciation," ST 232 (1964), p. 301.146–51. The story is cited by R. Cormack, "The Mosaic Decoration of St. Demetrios, Thessaloniki," *BSA* 64 (1969), 17–52, esp. 51.

[57] L. Mavrodinova, "Saint Théodore, évolution et particularités de son type iconographique dans la peinture médiévale," *Bulletin de l'Institut des Arts*, Académie Bulgare des Sciences, 13 (1969), 33–52. Nicolas Oikonomides glosses over the differences between the two faces ("C'est comme si les artistes voulaient représenter deux fois le même personnage"), but this does not invalidate his hypothesis that both images derived from a single portrait type: "Le dédoublement de Saint Théodore et les villes d'Euchaïta et d'Euchaneia," *AnalBoll* 104 (1986), 327–35.

[58] Stikas, *To oikodomikon chronikon*, pl. 42 (Theodore Teron); T. Chatzidakis-Bacharas, *Hoi toichographies tou Hosiou Louka* (Athens, 1982), 69–70, pls. 4–5 (Theodore Stratelates).

[59] S. Pelekanides, *Kastoria*, I. *Byzantinai toichographiai* (Thessaloniki, 1953), pl. 21a.

[60] P. A. Underwood, *The Kariye Djami*, I (New York, 1966), 255; III, pls. 494–97.

[61] *BHG* 1764; ed. *ActaSS*, Nov. IV, 52EF. See C. Zuckerman, "The Reign of Constantine V in the Miracles of St. Theodore the Recruit," *REB* 46 (1988), 191.

[62] *BHG* 1754; ed. PG 99, col. 313A.

[63] *BHG* 1755; ed. PG 99, col. 216C.

[64] D. Mouriki, "The Portraits of Theodore Studites in Byzantine Art," *JÖB* 20 (1971), 249–80.

[65] Ernst Kitzinger compared the process to the writing of the features on a flat "slate": "Some Reflections on Portraiture in Byzantine Art," *ZRVI* 8 (1963), 185–93, esp. 187. See also I. Spatharakis, *The Portrait in Byzantine Illuminated Manuscripts* (Leiden, 1976), 254–55.

[66] *Narratio de imagine Edessena*, 1; PG 113, col. 425A.

[67] *BHG* 1366; ed. Sullivan, p. 154, chap. 44.44–46. The passage is discussed by M.-J. Baudinet, "Relation iconique à Byzance au IXe siècle," *Les études philosophiques* 1 (1978), 96–97.

[68] *BHG* 1425; ed. PG 97, col. 1213C.

which recorded the saints' characteristic physiognomy; the rest of the design, the coloring, the modeling, and the background that enlivened the image (what the modern critic might call "the style"), could be left to the skills of the artist.[69]

Even if the underdrawing was the essential part of the likeness, there is no implication in the Life of Nikon that the coloring provided by the painter was unnecessary. Except for the *acheiropoiētoi* of Christ, images without colors were not considered complete by the Byzantines. The incompleteness of the uncolored sketch, or shadow, as opposed to the finished image, was the basis for a common *topos* describing the relationship between the Old and New Testaments. The simile is most frequently encountered in patristic exegesis and iconodule polemic,[70] but it is also found in hagiography. For example, Ignatios the Deacon, in his Life of Patriarch Tarasios, says that Christ is announced by the word of truth, as if sketched in black by the servants of the Word, but is painted and circumscribed by the deed, as if through colors.[71]

III. The Saints' Lives on Icon Theory

Icons were to be found everywhere: a biography of Theodore of Stoudios attributed to Michael states that there is no such area, no such location, no such house where icons have not been set up in their brilliance.[72] Surrounded by them constantly, the Byzantines were accustomed to seeing icons and to addressing them while in trouble. But how did they define the εἰκών? The problem was serious since the Byzantines had to distinguish between the icon and the idol. Christianity having at the very start rejected the veneration of idols, the sin of *eidōlolatreia* was condemned in hagiographical texts: thus Theodora, the pious servant of Basil the Younger, is said to have reached, in her ascent to heaven, the fifteenth *telōneion,* toll-station, where her soul was checked to find out whether she had surrendered to the sin of *eidōlolatreia* and other heresies; it was a place at which not only idolworshipers had to be stopped, but also their friends, who were evidently guilty by association.[73] As is well known, the problem of what is the icon, of its distinction from the idol, was raised in the eighth and ninth centuries, during the so-called Iconoclast dispute.

The Iconoclasts denied the cult of icons on both philosophical and theological grounds. Stephen the Deacon relates the discussion that Emperor Constantine V had with Stephen the Younger, when the emperor indicated a philosophical contradiction in the traditional teaching of the church: how is it possible, asked Constantine, to represent sensually (αἰσθητικῶς) and to venerate in material form (διὰ ὕλης) the beings that people proclaimed to be beyond experience (ἄπειρα), hard to observe (δυσθεώρητα), and impossible to be grasped by reason (μήτε νῷ λεπτά. Read ληπτά?).[74] Constantine's statement is, in its core, a Kantian distinction between phenomena, accessible to our senses, and essences that we are unable to perceive. In no sense was Iconoclasm a prohibition of visual art—in the often-cited words of Stephen the Deacon, the Iconoclasts preserved and adorned the images of trees, birds, and animals, especially the Satanic horse races, hunts, "theaters" (probably circus scenes), and hippodromes.[75] What they denied was the link between the image (the idol) and the ineffable deity (Logos) or heavenly power (angels) or divine persons (the Virgin and saints). Ignatios, the author of the Vita of Patriarch Tarasios, speaks of the heretics who accused Christians of idolatry and rejected the icons of the incarnated true God Christ, of the Mother of God who truly brought him forth, of incorporeal powers, and of all the saints.[76] This "Kantian" approach implied the identification of the idol and the icon. Stephen the Deacon accuses the Iconoclasts of not distinguishing "between the holy and the defiled," of drawing no line between the images of Christ and Apollo, between the Virgin and Artemis.[77] The same argumentation is repeated in the Vita of Michael the Synkellos: the Iconoclasts

[69] Sometimes the artists' skills could be deceptive. A Russian legend tells of a devil drawn on the board underneath a painted image of the Virgin. The true nature of the icon was only revealed when the Russian St. Basil the Blessed (16th century) smashed it with a rock; B. Uspensky, *The Semiotics of the Russian Icon* (Lisse, 1976), 28 note 52.

[70] For references, see D. Sheerin, "Lines and Colors: Painting as Analogue to Typology in Greek Patristic Literature," *The 17th International Byzantine Congress, Abstracts of Short Papers* (Washington, D.C., 1986), 317–18.

[71] *BHG* 1698, p. 416.9–12.

[72] *BHG* 1755; ed. PG 99, col. 177C. The modern literature on Byzantine image theory is very extensive. For a recent survey of the problems, see H. Belting, *Bild und Kult* (Munich, 1990), esp. 164–84.

[73] *BHG* 263; ed. Veselovskij, *Sbornik* 46 (1889), supp., p. 30.28–30.

[74] *BHG* 1666, col. 1157C; Metaphrastes (*BHG* 1667; ed. Iadevaia, p. 151.2066–67) reproduces this episode with a slight modification.

[75] *BHG* 1666, col. 1113A.

[76] *BHG* 1698; ed. I. A. Heikel, p. 397.20–23.

[77] *BHG* 1666, col. 1157C. Metaphrastes (*BHG* 1667; ed. Iadevaia, p. 151) omits this argumentation.

called Christ's images idols like those of Apollo, the Virgin's icons idols like those of Artemis, and equated saints "to other false godheads."[78]

The theological argumentation of the Iconoclasts was, or at least was perceived by their adversaries to be, a Docetist heresy; the enemies of icons believed, according to Gregory the biographer of Basil the Younger, that God did not become man actually (ἀληθείᾳ) but only in imagination (φαντασίᾳ).[79] Therefore his representation as incarnate, in a human body, had no sense—the icon was soulless and dead.[80]

Hagiography had as its goal the refutation of the Iconoclastic argument. The central issue of the refutation was the distinction between the idol and the icon. A miniature in the ninth-century Pantocrator Psalter (ms. 61, folio 165r) differentiates visually between idols and those images that God had commanded (Fig. 18). The painting provides a commentary on verses 12–15 of Psalm 113: "Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands." It shows at the lower left Patriarch John the Grammarian gesturing toward two idols set on columns. In the center of the page, King David turns away from the patriarch, as if to reject the Iconoclasts' failure to distinguish between idols and icons. With his left hand David indicates an image of the temple, in the upper right portion of the page, together with its holy of holies, including the ark, the cherubim, and the sacred objects, which God had ordered to be made. Beseleel, the craftsman chosen by God to work in the temple, stands below, to the right of David. Here, then, David demonstrates the true interpretation of his psalm, proving that his text does not refer to *all* religious images, but only to idols.[81]

The distinction between icon and idol was often reiterated by the biographers of the saints. "O Christ," exclaims the hagiographer of Michael the Synkellos, "how could you endure that the icon of your appearance (μορφή), which you had assumed from the Holy Virgin, the Mother of God, for the purpose of our salvation, these people name an idol?"[82] According to a vita of Theodore of Stoudios, the idol has a similarity (ἐμφέρεια) with the demon, which reflects the abomination of its prototype; the archetype of the icon, on the other hand, is honorable, since it depicts God or a saint, and accordingly what is painted on the board is worth seeing. The idol, continues the hagiographer, is an image of falsity, the icon that of the truth.[83] The difference between the icon and the idol, says the hagiographer of Nicholas of Stoudios, is the same as that between Christ and Beliar.[84]

The same contrast is brought out by Ignatios in his Vita of Patriarch Tarasios, which was written shortly after 842: the Iconoclast is insolent, since he confuses Zeus the impostor and the holy image of Christ.[85] The distinction, according to Ignatios, is largely one of substance: the idols possess malice (ἄγη) contrary to the pious (εὐαγῆ) images of the holy icons; the idols are as dirty and deformed as their prototypes, whereas the prototypes of icons are august (σεπτά). The idols are products of Hellenic impiety, the icons are the perfect objects (κατορθώματα) of Christian worship. Ignatios even appears to recognize—and reject—the rhetorical, emotive, and sensual aspects of Hellenistic art, when he describes the idols as "inventions formed anew out of what in no wise existed in any place, and enticing respect to themselves by means of their pathetic qualities (παθητικαῖς ποιότησι)."[86] This diatribe echoes the one hundredth canon of the Quinisext Council (692), which forbids "paintings, whether on boards or otherwise [i.e., reliefs] that bewitch the sight and corrupt the heart, arousing the combustion of disgraceful pleasures."[87]

In another passage, which follows a description of images of the Crucifixion, Ignatios implies that too much *pathos* would be inappropriate in an icon of Christ: "having taken flesh of like substance to our own, in no way denying his Godhead . . . ," he is painted and circumscribed in his works by painters "who do not blend what is simple and fleshless in substance with thick matter, nor is he curtailed and submitting to passion" (οὐδὲ γὰρ περιτέμνεται καὶ πάθος ὑφίσταται).[88] This statement seems to

[78] *BHG* 1296; *IRAIK* 11 (1906), p. 240.32–34.

[79] *BHG* 263; ed. Veselovskij, *Sbornik* 53 (1891), supp., p. 121.16–17.

[80] Ibid., p. 121.31; see also p. 123.15.

[81] S. Dufrenne, "Une illustration 'historique', inconnue, du Psautier du Mont-Athos, Pantocrator No 61," *CahArch* 15 (1965), 83–95.

[82] *BHG* 1296, p. 240.27–29.

[83] *BHG* 1755; ed. PG 99, col. 180AB

[84] *BHG* 1365; ed. PG 105, col. 880B.

[85] *BHG* 1698; ed. Heikel, p. 417.1–2.

[86] Ibid., p. 406.15–21. Nikephoros also accuses idols of representing what does not exist; *Antirrheticus* I, chap. 29 (ed. PG 100, col. 277B). See K. Parry, "Theodore Studites and the Patriarch Nicephoros on Image-Making as a Christian Imperative," *Byzantion* 59 (1989), 164–83.

[87] Mansi, XI, col. 986; on this passage, see Dagron, "Le culte des images" (above, note 30), 133–60, esp. 136.

[88] *BHG* 1698; ed. Heikel, p. 416.10–14.

reflect an ambivalence over images of the Crucifixion that is found also in ninth-century art. What type of Crucifixion scene would best reflect orthodox belief, that is, the union of the two natures on the cross, mortal and divine, passible and impassible? Should the crucified Christ be shown with his eyes open or shut, with his body upright or slumped, clothed or naked? During the half century after the end of Iconoclasm, all of these solutions were tried. In the miniature of the Crucifixion on folio 67r of the Chludov Psalter, for example, Christ is shown with his eyes open, while in the Crucifixion scenes on folios 45v and 72v his lids are closed.[89] On folio 98r of the ninth-century marginal psalter in the Pantocrator monastery on Mount Athos, the crucified Christ is shown with his head erect,[90] while in the miniatures of the Chludov Psalter it slumps to one side (but not to the same extent as that of the bad thief, shown on folio 45v of the same manuscript). In the miniature of the Pantocrator Psalter, Christ is naked save for a loincloth, as he is on folio 72v of the Chludov Psalter. However, on folios 45v and 67r of the Chludov Psalter, he wears the long robe, the colobium.

The most graphic ninth-century example of indecision over the form of the Crucifixion is to be found on folio 30v of the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus in Paris, ms. gr. 510 (Fig. 19). In the underdrawing for this miniature, Christ was portrayed hanging naked from the cross, save for a loincloth; but in the finished version the artist overpainted his body with a purple colobium.[91] Whoever had the original image changed cannot have objected to the underdrawing as an illustration of the death of Christ in and of itself, for the Deposition and Burial are still depicted on the same page of the manuscript (Fig. 19).[92] The objection evidently was to Christ's nakedness. The effect of the colobium, in paintings of the Crucifixion, was to flatten Christ's body, to make it, in the words of Ignatius, "simple and fleshless in substance"; this can be seen most clearly in a famous eighth-century icon from the collection at Mount Sinai, where the strongly modeled torso of the naked thief on the left contrasts strikingly with the thinly painted robe of Christ (Fig. 20). Perhaps, also, with the Iconoclastic dispute still a living memory at the time that the Paris Gregory was painted, the naked body of Christ was still too redolent of idolatry. In Byzantine art, idols, such as those depicted in the ninth-century Chludov and Pantocrator Psalters, were characteristically shown either nude or semi-nude (Figs. 18, 21).[93] On the other hand, the relationship between the image of the crucified Christ and idols had been seen by some writers in a more positive light. Agathangelos, the author of the Armenian Vita of St. Gregory the Illuminator, argued that Christ made himself a dead image on the cross to draw men away from the worship of idols. This passage was cited, from the Greek version of the Life, by several Iconodule texts.[94]

During the tenth century, the iconography of Christ naked upon the cross, with his eyes closed and his head inclined, became standard in Byzantine art.[95] The eventual acceptance of the naked, or more precisely near-naked, image of the suffering Christ in art has an interesting literary parallel in a hymn by the monk Symeon the Theologian, composed around the year 1000, which attempts a distinction between nakedness and *pathos;* nakedness, says Symeon, is not in itself shameful, because Christ "became entirely man, even he who was entirely God." "Each of our members will be the entire Christ," even including the *pudenda.* The nakedness of the saints is "immobile, innocent, and without passion (ἀπαθής)"; the nakedness of those who touch flesh to flesh is a blasphemy against Christ, who gave lack of passion (ἀπάθεια) to his servants.[96]

The second point of the Iconodule theory of icons is that the icon itself is not the object of veneration, but its prototype (or archetype) is. This idea, expressed already by Basil the Great, was re-

[89] Moscow, Historical Museum, ms. add. gr. 129; M. V. Ščepkina, *Miniatjury Chludovskoj Psaltyri* (Moscow, 1977). On the iconography of the dead Christ on the cross, see, most recently, Belting, *Bild und Kult,* esp. 137, 301–4.

[90] Ms. 61; J. R. Martin, "The Dead Christ on the Cross in Byzantine Art," in *Late Classical and Mediaeval Studies in Honor of Albert Mathias Friend, Jr.,* ed. K. Weitzmann (Princeton, 1955), 189–96, esp. 190, fig. 4.

[91] Ibid., 191.

[92] A. Kartsonis, *Anastasis: The Making of an Image* (Princeton, 1986), 143.

[93] Dufrenne, "Une illustration 'historique'," 83–85, figs. 1–2. On the depictions of idols in Byzantine art, see N. P. Ševčenko, *The Life of Saint Nicholas in Byzantine Art* (Turin, 1983), 131–33, with earlier bibliography.

[94] G. Lafontaine, ed., *La version grecque ancienne du livre arménien d'Agathange: Édition critique* (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1973), 202, 1–13. See S. Gero, *Byzantine Iconoclasm during the Reign of Constantine V,* CSCO 384 (Louvain, 1977), 98–99 note 147. We wish to thank Prof. Gero for this reference.

[95] An early dated example is the Crucifixion in the main apse of the New Church at Tokalı Kilise, painted before 969; A. W. Epstein, *Tokalı Kilise: Tenth-Century Metropolitan Art in Byzantine Cappadocia* (Washington, D.C., 1986), 73, figs. 83–87.

[96] Hymn 15, ed. J. Koder and J. Paramelle, SC 156 (Paris, 1969), pp. 290.157–294.219.

peated by the Iconodules again and again.[97] Among the hagiographers, we may cite the author of the Vita of Theophylaktos of Nikomedia, who characteristically compares the worship of the icon with the respect paid to the emperor's image: those who dare to cast contempt on the portrait of the emperor will be punished, and those who discard the icon of the demiurge of the entire world deserve a greater castigation.[98] Through the icon the believer ascends to the prototype and achieves salvation—the author of the Vita of Theodore of Stoudios formulates it categorically: "Had we denied the veneration of holy icons, our faith would have been empty, our message (κήρυγμα) meaningless." This denial, he continues, would have ruined all (good) deeds, all virtue, all knowledge of the divine.[99] The icon is a door (θύρα), proclaims the author of the Vita of Stephen the Younger, which leads our reason made in God's likeness (Gen. 1:26) to the inner resemblance of the prototype.[100] Metaphrastes preserves this image,[101] and in the Vita of Theodore Graptos he also links icon worship with the idea of salvation: the devil, says he, prohibits the veneration of the divine image of Christ in order to make us forget his incarnation and to deprive us of "the saving desire."[102]

According to the Vita of Andrew "in Crisi," as a tool of salvation the icon had its beauty (κάλλος) not in form (σχῆμα) nor in shining colors but in the "ineffable blissfulness of represented virtue."[103] We venerate, says the hagiographer of Basil the Younger, not material paints but the image (μορφή) of God and of saints represented by material paints.[104] The Vita of Gregory of Dekapolis states that not the painting itself is the subject of reverence but the divine or virtuous images revealed in the icon "by relationship" (σχετικῶς).[105]

John Merkouropoulos dwells in detail on the treatise written by John of Damascus in defense of the cult of icons. This treatise, according to Merkouropoulos, consisted of two volumes. In the first volume John categorized the icons or divided them into two kinds (it is, probably, better to say that John analyzed two meanings of the word εἰκών): some of them had to be perceived "by way of worship" (λατρευτικῶς), others "by relationship" only. As the example of the former, Merkouropoulos cites the cult of the Son as the *eikōn* of the invisible God; the latter are the icons of holy persons, such as Abraham and Isaac. The second volume of John's treatise was devoted to the tradition of icon worship beginning with biblical patriarchs and prophets.[106]

Thus we can summarize the principles of Iconodule aesthetics as represented in the saints' lives: the real value of the image consists of its inner essence, its spiritual beauty, its relationship with the divine prototype, and not its accidental qualities—the forms and the colors. The work of art has no life in its own right; it reflects the more profound world of truth and in such a capacity makes the beholder better. Nikephoros the "Philosopher," the biographer of Patriarch Anthony Kauleas, expressed this principle in his "definition" of his hero: Anthony was, says he, an icon of virtue, a monument (στήλη) of manliness, a statue (ἄγαλμα) of chastity.[107] Icons, stelai, statues—Nikephoros perceived all of them as reflections of abstract qualities, of "essences" disconnected from aesthetic categories.

IV. The Social Function of Images

Recently, modern scholars have increasingly turned their attention from the formal and aesthetic qualities of Byzantine art to its social functions, an area of research in which the lives and enkomia of the saints play a prominent part.[108] We would like, in this section of our paper, to add a few further references and observations which bear on the social role of images, and which may still be unfamiliar to art historians.

The image was, in the hagiographer's perception, not only beautiful but also useful. The author of a vita of Theodore of Stoudios mentions a certain Luke who attentively studied the Holy Gospel and, taking it as his basis, composed an icon of the Lord, an honorable work which he left for poster-

[97] E.g., Mansi, XIII, col. 69.
[98] *BHG* 2451, p. 79.25–31.
[99] *BHG* 1755; ed. PG 99, col. 173B.
[100] *BHG* 1666; ed. PG 100, col. 1113A.
[101] *BHG* 1667; ed. Iadevaia, p. 98.785–86.
[102] *BHG* 1746, col. 661A.
[103] *BHG* 111; *ActaSS*, Oct. VIII (1953), col. 139B: τὸ γὰρ αὐτῆς θεῖον κάλλος, οὐ σχήματί τινι καὶ μορφῆς εὐχροίᾳ διαγλαΐζεται, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀφράστῳ μακαριότητι κατὰ ἀρετὴν θεωρεῖται.
[104] *BHG* 263; ed. Veselovskij, *Sbornik* 53 (1891), supp., p. 124.19–21.
[105] *BHG* 711; ed. F. Dvornik, p. 69.20–24.
[106] *BHG* 395, p. 319.1–10.
[107] *BHG* 139, p. 12.31.
[108] See, especially, the pioneering article by Dagron, "Le culte des images" (above, note 30). Two important recent studies make extensive use of saints' lives: Cormack, *Writing in Gold* (above, note 35a), and Connor, *The Crypt at Hosios Loukas* (above, note 12).

ity;[109] the word he uses to designate "composition," ἱστορήσας, means "to narrate," and this narration had an extra-aesthetic, social function—it had to exercise an impact on people. Even more explicitly, the same idea is expressed in the Vita of Stephen the Younger, where the hagiographer, Stephen the Deacon, emphasizes the impact of images on distinct social groups: he relates that in "a public place," in the Milion, there were paintings of six ecumenical councils which "announced the orthodox creed to peasants (ἀγροίκοις), foreigners, and private (ἰδιώταις, ed. ἰδίοις) citizens."[110]

More specifically, the social function of images is stressed in John Mauropous' speech on the festival in Euchaita devoted to St. Theodore. According to Mauropous, the festival at Euchaita was dedicated to Theodore the Foot Soldier, or "Recruit"; the writer opposes the image of the infantryman in the church to "those mounted and brilliant and covered with gold." "Our" pedestrian Theodore, he stresses, has no arrogance or haughtiness, and his exploits demonstrate the might of the feeble and the greatness of the small. Therefore "the poor (πτωχός) and pedestrian and numerous men" pour in from all the regions to glorify Theodore, since they can more easily rely on and approach the divine martyr thus represented as one who is closer (οἰκειότερος) to them. Certainly, St. Theodore in Euchaita was not the holy man of the poor and humble exclusively: "many a rider," says Mauropous, "(it would be close to the truth to say all of them) looks at him with the utmost attention and renders due respect."[111] Nevertheless, the "pedestrian" Theodore was predominantly the saint of the poor: Mauropous returns again to this detail while asserting that the feeble (πένητες) who had gathered in Euchaita did not stay aloof from the service and expenses.[112]

This characterization of St. Theodore the Foot Soldier as a man who was "closer" to the poor raises the question of whether such a portrait existed also in art. In the pre-Iconoclastic icons, which, like the hagiography of that period, do not distinguish between two Saints Theodore,[113] he is depicted either in silks or in embossed golden armor—both indicative of high status.[114] In the post-Iconoclastic period, Theodore the Foot Soldier and his more socially elevated namesake, Theodore Stratelates, the general, were frequently portrayed standing side by side. It is noteworthy that in many of the images of the tenth and eleventh centuries it is hard to discern a difference between the two Theodores in the richness or poverty of their attire. We may take as an example the Harbaville Triptych in Paris, a work possibly of the mid-eleventh century.[115] In the upper section of the lefthand wing of this ivory, the two standing saints, each clearly identified by an inscription, can be seen turning toward each other; the military costumes in which they are dressed are almost identical.[116] However, in some later works of art there may be a suggestion of greater difference in their ranks. In the fresco on the south wall of the church of the Anargyroi at Kastoria, the two Theodores again stand side by side (Fig. 14); the general, on the left, is clad in a cuirass, brilliant and covered with gold, while the foot soldier, on the right, wears only a gray chain mail over which a sash has been tied.[117] A similar distinction between the two saints was made in the early fourteenth-century frescoes of the Parekklesion attached to the Kariye Camii in Constantinople. St. Theodore Stratelates is resplendent in an articulated bronze cuirass, which is topped by a high metal collar of bronze or gold and crossed by two diagonal bands of iron joining in the center under a diamond-shaped boss (Fig. 16). By contrast, the costume of Theodore the Foot Soldier is subdued (Fig. 15). His armor is concealed by a white sleeveless tunic; the cuirass itself, from what can be seen of it under the surcoat, is a very dark brown, as if made of leather. The collar around his neck is narrow and inconspicuous compared to that of his higher-ranking colleague (Fig. 16).[118] It seems, then, that the characterization of Theodore the Foot Soldier as a man who was "closer" to the poor was indeed eventually made in art, although the surviving examples are later in date than the oration of John Mauropous.

[109] *BHG* 1755; ed. PG 99, col. 177C.

[110] *BHG* 1666; ed. PG 100, col. 1172A. The sentence was omitted in Metaphrastes' version of the Vita: *BHG* 1667; ed. Iadevaia, p. 170.

[111] *BHG* 1772; ed. Lagarde (above, note 14), p. 208.17–28.

[112] Ibid., p. 209.9–11.

[113] Oikonomides, "Le dédoublement de Saint Théodore" (above, note 57).

[114] K. Weitzmann, *The Monastery of Saint Catherine at Mount Sinai: The Icons* (Princeton, 1976), 18–21, 36–37, pls. 4, 6, 15.

[115] A. Goldschmidt and K. Weitzmann, *Die byzantinischen Elfenbeinskulpturen des X.–XIII. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1934), 34, pl. 13.

[116] It should be noted, however, that on some Middle Byzantine ivories the attributes and costumes of the two saints are different. Thus, on the triptych in the Palazzo di Venezia at Rome, Theodore Stratelates has a sword, while Theodore Teron does not; ibid., 33, pl. 31.

[117] Pelekanides, *Kastoria,* I, pl. 21a.

[118] Underwood, *The Kariye Djami,* I, 255–56; III, pls. 494–97.

Images had not only a social but also a practical function: they could be helpful in a person's plight, especially in the case of sickness. Cures could be effected through a variety of mechanisms. For example, an image could be made of the diseased part of the body. We are told that a certain Menas, when he fell sick, came to the church of Sts. Damianos and Kosmas in Blachernae and painted an icon, drawing on it "the type of his ailment" and asked for a cure.[119] The striking feature of this story is that the image of the affected part was made *before* the miracle was accomplished, instead of after the event as a thank offering. The latter practice, which survives to this day, is attested during the late Roman period by Theodoret of Kyrrhos, who writes of those who come to the martyrs to seek their aid as intercessors: "that those who request in faith obtain what they ask for is witnessed visibly by their votive offerings displaying their cure. For some bring images (ἐκτυπώματα) of eyes, others of feet, others of hands. And some are made of gold, others of wood."[120] However, a group of small silver reliefs of eyes found in northern Syria suggests that such offerings could have been made both in anticipation of the cure and as a consequence of it, for some are inscribed with the words "in fulfillment of a vow,"[121] while on others is written, "Lord help, amen," as if the healing were yet to come (Fig. 22).[122]

Another means by which images could cure was by giving the suppliant access to the power of a miracle-working saint. One of the most remarkable miracles is described in a vita of John of Damascus. The ruler of Damascus accused John of treason and ordered his hand (or arm) to be cut off. After this amputation, John came into a chapel and prayed before "a divine icon bearing the face of the Mother of God." He fell asleep and saw in his dream the icon of the Virgin promising him healing, and, indeed, when he woke up the hand was fixed "in the previous harmony."[123] John Merkouropoulos, while reworking this legend in the twelfth century, reinforced the miracle, since he made Kosmas, John's adopted brother, see how the "picture of the icon" (γραφὴ τῆς εἰκόνος) stepped from the wood and cured the sleeping John. The panel, Merkouropoulos adds, remained deprived of the image (ἄγραφος).[124]

The Life of St. Nikon Metanoeite tells the story of a certain Prokopios, who lived in a metochion of St. Nikon's monastery and who suffered from cataract. Scorning recourse to any "human skill" (ἀνθρωπίνη τέχνη), he placed himself before the icon of Nikon "in the sacred oratory in the Metochion that was dedicated in the name of the saint," and raised his hands in prayer. He slept there, and was rewarded with a vision, from which he awoke cured.[125] The text concludes: "How wondrous you are, O God, in your holy men."[126] Another story from the Life of St. Nikon reiterates this last point, that the saint is a channel for the healing power of God, and also shows how the same idea could be expressed through the arrangement of images in a church.[127] The biographer tells us that a young boy named Luke was afflicted with paralysis of the jaw. He first prayed to the icon of Nikon which "hung before the inner sanctuary of the holy precinct of the monastery," where he was living as a novice—the monastery itself was dedicated to St. Nicholas. After his supplication he fell asleep, and imagined that he was transported "in thought to the holy and sacred house (οἶκος) of the blessed one [i.e., Nikon], and with the wings of faith touches the coffin (σορός) itself with his lips." He then called upon the saint, whereupon: "in his sleep he seemed to find himself upon the very ascent of the holy and sacred house of the saint by the west stairway (ἐν αὐτῇ . . . τῇ διὰ τῆς δυτικῆς κλίμακος ἀναβάσει τοῦ θείου καὶ ἱεροῦ οἴκου). There the commanding and divine icon bearing the name of [Christ] Antiphonetes is situated, and also the image of the great one is figured" (ἐκτετύπωτο).[128] Responding to instructions which seemed to issue from the icon of Nikon itself, Luke anointed himself with oil from the lamp that hung before it. When he awoke he was fully cured. The biographer concludes: "This extraordinary miracle testified even more to the saint's access to God" (πρὸς Θεὸν παρρησία).[129]

[119] *BHG* 373b, Mir. 20, pp. 49.24–50.1.

[120] *Graecarum affectionum curatio*, ed. J. Raeder (Leipzig, 1904), p. 217.14–19, bk. 8.64. A painting presented in gratitude for a cure is mentioned in the Life of Theodore of Sykeon; it was placed in a chapel in the church of the Archangel by a cleric, Solomon, and his wife, whom the saint had cured of evil spirits. *BHG* 1748; ed. Festugière, I, par. 103.5–7. See Cormack, *Writing in Gold*, 35. See also the texts cited by Dagron, "Le culte des images" (above, note 30), esp. 144–45.

[121] G. Vikan, "Art, Medicine, and Magic in Early Byzantium," *DOP* 38 (1984), 65–86, esp. 66–67, fig. 1.

[122] G. Vikan, *Byzantine Pilgrimage Art* (Washington, D.C., 1982), 45–46, fig. 38.

[123] *BHG* 884; ed. PG 94, col. 457A–C. On the concept of the speaking icon, see R. S. Nelson, "The Discourse of Icons, Then and Now," *Art History* 12.2 (1989), 144–57.

[124] *BHG* 395, pp. 324.16–325.17.

[125] *BHG* 1366; ed. Sullivan, pp. 218–22, chap. 64.

[126] Ibid., p. 222, chap. 64.40–41.

[127] Ibid., pp. 212–18, chap. 63.

[128] Ibid., p. 216, chap. 63.45–56.

[129] Ibid., pp. 216–18, chap. 63.70–72.

This story contains several points of interest for the historian of Byzantine art. First, it shows that not all icons of the same saint were equal. The supplicant prayed to the image of Nikon in his own monastery, but for the cure to be accomplished he had to be transported in a vision to a more effective icon, the one in the saint's monastery (of which the biographer happened to be the superior). It is also noteworthy that the account of the miracle describes the supplicant's visit to the shrine in two phases. First, the afflicted person went to the coffin containing the *relics* of the saint, and touched it with his lips. Second, he reverenced the saint's *image,* which in this case was evidently placed on an upper level, reached by stairs. Although the shrine of Nikon is no longer standing,[130] the same physical division between the saint's tomb and his image, on two separate levels, can still be observed in the Katholikon of Hosios Loukas, the shrine of St. Luke Steiriotes, who died in 953, some time before St. Nikon. The tomb and relics of St. Luke were located on the lower level of his church, in the north arm of the crypt; we know from his Life that his tomb, with its associated oil, was the focus of a healing cult.[131] On a higher level, directly above the saint's tomb, was the largest and most conspicuous of his images in the church, a mosaic portrait filling the western lunette beneath the vault over the north arm of the naos (Fig. 33). This mosaic was also associated with the saint's cult, for directly opposite it a small shrine, or *proskynetarion,* in the form of a four-columned baldachin, was inserted beneath an arched opening in the eastern wall of the north arm. The *proskynetarion* sheltered a small trough, which may have contained water, or perhaps myrrh, from the saint's tomb.[132]

Another point of interest in the story of Nikon's healing of the boy concerns the juxtaposition of images. The text tells us that the icon of Nikon in his own shrine was placed near an icon of Christ "Antiphonetes." This association of images was a visual witness to the intimacy of the saint with God.

The label of "Antiphonetes" is found attached to several surviving eleventh- and twelfth-century images, which probably reproduced an icon at the Chalkoprateia. In all these early copies Christ holds a book in his left hand and makes a distinctive blessing gesture of his right hand, which he raises in a vertical position with the ring finger bent to join the thumb and with the other three fingers extended (Figs. 24, 26). In the original legend concerning the icon, "Antiphonetes" had the meaning of "bondsman,"[133] but later copies of the icon suggest that its primary role became responsive.[134] Psellos tells a story of Empress Zoe, who had an image of Christ Antiphonetes made for her. She would speak to it, either thanking it for favors or trying to propitiate it in the case of misfortune; the icon would answer her by changing color, becoming red for a favorable and pale for an unfavorable reply.[135] Psellos' tale can be related to the appearance of an image of Christ with the inscription "Antiphonetes" on certain coins struck by Zoe (histamenon of 1041/2).[136] The other labeled copy of the Antiphonetes that is known from the eleventh century is a mosaic on the righthand pier flanking the sanctuary in the church of the Koimesis at Nicaea, which dated probably to shortly after 1065, but is now destroyed (Fig. 24).[137] This copy of the Antiphonetes was paired with a mosaic of the Virgin with Child, labeled "Eleousa" ("compassionate"), on the lefthand pier (Fig. 23).[138] A similar arrangement is preserved by the frescoes in the church of Panagia tou Arakou at Lagoudera on Cyprus, where the figure of Christ labeled "Antiphonetes," on the righthand pier of the sanctuary

[130] An excavation by G. A. Soteriou revealed a cruciform structure standing to the west of a basilican church on the akropolis of Sparta; it contained a tomb and was flanked by stairwells on its southeast and southwest sides; "Anaskaphai en te palaia Sparte," Πρακτ.'Αρχ.'Ετ. (1939), 107–18, esp. 116 and plan. Soteriou claimed that this was the shrine of St. Nikon. Although there are striking parallels between the information given in the life and the fittings and design of the cruciform structure, this identification has been challenged, most recently by P. Vokotopoulos, "Paratereseis sten legomene basilike tou Hagiou Nikonos," *Praktika tou 1. Diethnous Synedriou Peleponnesiakon Spoudon,* II (Athens, 1976–78), 273–85.

[131] Connor, *The Crypt at Hosios Loukas,* 62–88.

[132] Stikas, *To oikodomikon chronikon,* 248–58, figs. 130–34, arguing that this *proskynetarion* postdates the construction of the church. According to J. Spon and G. Wheler, who visited the monastery in the 17th century, this area of the Katholikon was at that time the focus of the healing cult: "L'espace d'entre ces deux églises [the Panagia and the Katholikon] est une chambre couverte, où ils font porter leurs malades, qui y guérissent, disent-ils, miraculeusement"; *Voyage d'Italie, de Dalmatie, de Grèce, et du Levant, fait aux années 1675 & 1676,* II (Amsterdam, 1679), 59–60. See Stikas, op cit., 190–91.

[133] C. Mango, *The Brazen House,* Arkaeologisk-kunsthistoriske Meddelelser, Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 4.4 (Copenhagen, 1959), 142.

[134] On the later examples of the Antiphonetes, see Z. Rasolkoska-Nikolovska, "Le Christ Antiphonitis d'après les monuments à Chypre," *Praktika tou 2. Diethnous Kyprologikou Synedriou,* II (Nicosia, 1986), 523–27.

[135] *Chronographia,* ed. É. Renauld, I (Paris, 1967), p. 149, chap. 66.

[136] P. Grierson, *Catalogue of the Byzantine Coins in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection,* III.1 (Washington, D.C., 1973), 162; ibid., III.2, p. 729, pl. 58.

[137] T. Schmit, *Die Koimesis-Kirche von Nikaia* (Berlin, 1927), 46–47, pl. 27. On the date, see C. Mango, "The Date of the Narthex Mosaics of the Church of the Dormition at Nicaea," *DOP* 13 (1959), 245–52, esp. 252.

[138] Schmit, op. cit., 44–46, pl. 25.

(Fig. 26), responds to a standing Virgin "Eleousa" on the left (Fig. 25).[139] In this case, the Virgin holds a long scroll recording her supplications on behalf of mortals, and her Son's responses thereto.[140]

Once again, the information given in the Life of St. Nikon about the lost decoration of his shrine can be related to the existing mosaics in the Katholikon of Hosios Loukas, especially to the arrangement of subjects in the two crossarms of the church.[141] In the eastern quadrant of the cross vault over the lower storey of the south arm there is a medallion bearing a bust-length figure of Christ, flanked by two angels, Uriel and Raphael, who appear in the north and south quadrants respectively (Fig. 27). Christ is depicted in the same form as the labeled copies of the "Antiphonetes" of the eleventh and twelfth centuries; that is, he holds a book in his left hand, and with his right makes the characteristic gesture of joining the ring finger with the thumb, and raising the other three fingers vertically (Fig. 28). In the lunette immediately beneath this image, on the east wall of the south arm, is a mosaic of the Virgin holding the Child in one arm and turning her head toward him (Fig. 29)—an image similar to the Virgin "Eleousa" that supplicated the Christ "Antiphonetes" at Nicaea (Fig. 23). On the facing wall, opposite the Virgin, is a mosaic depicting a doctor saint, to be identified as Panteleimon, although the inscription has been renewed (Fig. 30). A similar arrangement of images can be seen in the lower level of the north arm of the naos. Once again the eastern lunette is occupied by an image of the Virgin, of the same type as the one in the south arm, but facing in the opposite direction, for reasons of symmetry (Fig. 32). Another image of Christ appears in the medallion of the vault immediately above her, except that here Christ makes a slightly different gesture with his right hand, bending the little, the ring, and the middle fingers to join the thumb, while the index finger is slightly raised (Fig. 31).[141a] The flanking archangels here are Michael and Gabriel, rather than the lower-ranking Raphael and Uriel. The image facing the Virgin on the west wall is not St. Panteleimon, but, as we have already seen, the portrait of another healer, St. Luke Steiriotes, the founder of the monastery (Fig. 33). It will be remembered that the saint's relics, with their associated oil, were the center of a cult in the north arm of the crypt, directly beneath the miracle-worker's portrait in mosaic, and that there was, in addition, a shrine to the saint built into the archway facing his image. In light of the text concerning the icon of St. Nikon, it is possible to see the logic connecting these images in the north and south arms of the church: each of the two healing saints, Luke and Panteleimon, is associated with Christ and with an intercessory image of the Virgin and Child, as a visual demonstration of their "access to God," and thus of their effectiveness. Since St. Luke is accompanied by the higher-ranking archangels, he is shown to stand closer to God than Panteleimon.

A common theme in saints' lives was the uselessness and cost of physical medicine, in contrast to the spiritual medicine of the saints' prayers.[142] In the Life of Nikon we are told, for example, of a "strategos" who was smitten with paralysis: in spite of the best care from the doctors, his hopes of finding a cure from them proved to be vain. Only when the official fell at the feet of Nikon "and sought the saint's prayer as a kind of medicine allaying pain and capable of easily removing all suffering," did the man's condition improve. "By prayer alone," the saint healed him, says the biographer.[143] The same theme appears repeatedly in the Life of St. Luke: first the sufferer turns to the doctors, only to see his finances shrink while his disease grows; finally the patient turns to the prayers of the saint.[144] The effectiveness of prayer on its own as medicine was also demonstrated in art. For example, in the mosaics in the Katholikon of Hosios Loukas, on the west wall of the south arm, St. Panteleimon holds a surgeon's scalpel and a box of medical instruments (Fig. 30). St. Luke, on the other hand, in the corresponding position on the west wall of the north arm, raises his two empty hands in prayer (Fig. 33), just as he is described doing in his vita when he performs a miracle ("raising his hands up on high, he prayed").[145] The juxtaposition makes the point stressed by the biographer of Nikon: the saint's prayer is a kind of medicine. This message is reinforced by the mo-

[139] Stylianou, *Painted Churches* (above, note 24), 170, fig. 101.

[140] Rasolkoska-Nikolovska, "Le Christ Antiphonitis," 524.

[141] Good photographs can be found in Stikas, *To oikodomikon chronikon,* pls. 63–72.

[141a] This image is of a type to which the label "Pantocrator" was applied by the mid-12th century. See Jane Timken Matthews, *The Pantocrator: Title and Image,* Ph.D. dissertation (New York University, 1976), 31–32, 38, 88.

[142] A. Kazhdan, "The Image of the Medical Doctor in Byzantine Literature of the Tenth to Twelfth Centuries," *DOP* 38 (1984), 43–51, esp. 45–48.

[143] *BHG* 1366; ed. Sullivan, pp. 134–40, chap. 39.

[144] *BHG* 994; ed. E. Martini, pp. 106–7 (chap. 62), 117–19 (chaps. 85–86).

[145] Ibid., p. 102.12, chap. 48.

saics in the vault above St. Luke. The eastern quadrant of the vault, as we have seen, held an image of Christ, with the archangels Michael and Gabriel flanking him in the north and south quadrants. But in the western quadrant, immediately above the saint, is "James the Brother of the Lord" (Fig. 31). His presence here is a reference to the Epistle of James 5:13–16: "Is anyone among you in trouble? . . . He should send for the elders of the congregation to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer offered in faith will save the sick man, the Lord will raise him from his bed, and any sins he may have committed will be forgiven. . . . A good man's prayer is powerful and effective." This passage was cited by Symeon Metaphrastes at the end of his life of St. James the Brother of the Lord.[146] Appropriately, the mosaic portrait of St. Nikon on the west wall of the naos of the Katholikon at Hosios Loukas also depicts the saint in the orant position (Fig. 1).

One last observation may be made here concerning the mosaics in the vault over the south arm of the katholikon. As we have seen, the eastern quadrant frames a bust of Christ, while the north and south quadrants contain angels. The west quadrant, however, over the image of Panteleimon, contains a bust of Zacharias holding a pyxis (Fig. 27). Once again, the choice of this particular saint may be connected with the supernatural effectiveness of prayer, for, as Theodore of Stoudios pointed out in a sermon on the birth of John the Baptist, that nativity came about "not through the natural sequence [of events], but by the success of prayer."[147]

The Vita of Stephen Sabaites contains an account of a miraculous healing which gives a curious, reverse twist to the stories about icons that have been cited above. In this case a cure was effected not by contact with but by abstinence from images. A certain Leontios suffered from demonic assaults; Stephen promised him release if Leontios would for a while stop partaking of holy communion or looking at icons, and then, on an appointed day, would once again partake of the divine bread and in his sincerity "embrace" holy icons.[148]

When cures were no longer in prospect, and the hour of death approached, then, too, images had a role to play. The eleventh-century Life of Lazarus Galesiotes tells of an old monk named Nikon (not the wonder-worker of Sparta) who, knowing that he was about to die, lay down in the refectory "in the place in which there are holy images of the Theotokos and of the archangel Michael stretching out [their arms] in supplication (εἰς δέησιν) to the Savior, and quietly surrendered his soul to God through the hands of the angels."[149]

Images could help in birth as well as in death. A case of an icon playing a role in promoting fertility is found in the Life of St. Stephen the Younger. When St. Stephen's mother wished for a son, she visited the icon in the church of the Blachernae that showed the Virgin holding her own Son in her arms. After standing in front of this icon and beseeching it with tears, she was, as we have seen, rewarded with a vision of the Virgin, who appeared to her "in the same form as in her icon." Striking the woman in her loins, the Virgin promised her that she would have a son. The hagiographer explained: "By such means, she who in a maternal way most swiftly moves her Son's pity (ἔλεον) to the succor of our race, transformed the despondent woman into a contented mother."[150]

The supernatural powers of icons were not only beneficent and healing; on occasion icons could be hostile, especially when they were under attack. The story of the image of St. George that returned the Saracen's missile has already been cited.[151] The defensive powers of icons became particularly evident during the Iconoclastic persecutions when the enemies of icon worship tried to destroy holy images and, according to orthodox legend, failed. The collection of stories about miracles worked by various icons of the Virgin is particularly rich in cases of the icons putting up a miraculous resistance: stonecutters could not demolish the holy image (ἀπεικόνισμα),[152] and when a certain Leo dared to strike the icon with a sword, blood gushed from the Virgin's breast, so that Leo, ashamed and afraid, fell to the ground and died in three days.[153] The same icon had been thrown into the sea in Constantinople by Patriarch Germanos I when he was pursued by Leo III, and with incredible speed it crossed the sea and reappeared in Rome;[154] this

[146] *BHG* 764; ed. PG 115, col. 208D.
[147] PG 99, col. 753A.
[148] *BHG* 1670, col. 552B.

[149] *BHG*, 979; *Acta SS*, Nov. III (1910), col. 560E, cited by A. Cutler, "Under the Sign of the Deēsis: On the Question of Representativeness in Medieval Art and Literature," *DOP* 41 (1987), 145–54, esp. 147.
[150] *BHG*, 1666, col. 1076B–D.
[151] Above, note 20.
[152] *BHG* 1066, p. 195.16–20.
[153] Ibid., p. 198 f.
[154] Ibid., pp. 196–98.

legend was retold in the Vita of Patriarch Germanos, but in relation to an icon of Christ.[155] According to the accounts of Russian travelers to Constantinople, they saw there an icon of Christ which was said to have made the sea-crossing to Rome in the time of Germanos, and to have returned in one day.[156] Other wounded icons could be seen by visitors to the capital: for example, there was an icon of Christ that had been stabbed by a Jew, which, together with its blood, was visible in St. Sophia.[157]

One final function of the image that is mentioned in the saints' lives is that of validating the miracles of a wonder-working saint—an important matter for the keepers of the shrine. Archbishop John of Thessaloniki, a hagiographer of St. Demetrios, while concluding the First Miracle of the saint—the healing of the eparch Marianos—refers those who would suspect his trustworthiness to the mosaics on the wall of the church facing the city stadium; these mosaics contained the "description" (γραφή) of the entire story.[158] The passage has been used to solve the problem of the location of the stadium;[159] for our purpose, however, the evidence is important since it shows that images dedicated to saints' lives could be exhibited outside shrines, as later Andronikos I would locate his political placards. A somewhat similar passage is found in another seventh-century life, that of St. Spyridon. The author, Theodore of Paphos, refers to a scene of Spyridon overturning the idols in Alexandria, which was painted on the saint's basilica on Cyprus, above its central door. Theodore says that when he first declaimed the Life of St. Spyridon in the church, his audience was skeptical of the episode concerning the idols, having not heard it before. However, some of them soon associated the story with the painting on the church, so that at the same time the vita was confirmed and the meaning of the image, which had hitherto been unknown, was revealed.[160] In this case text and image reinforced each other.

A later instance of a hagiographer appealing to the visual arts for verification of a story occurs in the Life of St. Nikon Metanoeite, where we are told of a boy who fell ill with paraplegia, "so that he got no benefit at all from the skill and knowledge of the doctors. . . . The great one alone saved the [boy]," claims the biographer, adding, "the writing worked and engraved upon the silver censer of the monastery and the very picture (εἶδος) of the miracle in the form of an iconic relief (εἰκονικὴ ἐκτύπωσις) now proves this quite clearly."[161] Seeing was believing.

V. Sculpture and Minor Arts

Unlike painting, sculpture did not hold the place of honor in hagiographical writings, and the attitude toward statues is cautious, since they are naturally identified as pagan idols. The hagiographer of Basil the Younger is clear in this respect: the demons, covered with soot, corrupted and outlandish, seemed to him to resemble the idols of the "theater" (i.e., hippodrome).[162] A positive perception of statues, however, was not impossible: some people, says the biographer of Constantine the Jew, follow the rule (νόμος) of holding in esteem the most valuable statues that more manifestly display the archetype through the excellence of their material.[163] The Vita of Theodore of Edessa says that the saint sat in his cell in such a complete silence that he resembled a bronze statue.[164] A similar comparison had been made with reference to Constantius II, in a well-known passage by Ammianus Marcellinus describing the emperor's triumphal entry into Rome.[165]

In the Martyrium of the apostle Andrew, we read about a miracle performed in Sinope when the apostle approached a stone statue, made the sign of the cross with his hand, and addressed it as follows: "I say to you, statue, fear the sign of the cross, and bring forth water." Thereupon, a deluge of water gushed from the mouth of the statue; the crowd, flabbergasted, asked Andrew to stop the flow of water, and he did.[166] This episode was meant to demonstrate the power of a Christian saint over the heathen force concealed in idols. The method used by the saint to achieve his ends, making the sign of the cross, was also employed by

[155] *BHG* 697; ed. L. Lamza, *Patriarch Germanos I. von Konstantinopel (715–730),* Das östliche Christentum, N.F. 27 (Würzburg, 1975), 232–34.

[156] G. P. Majeska, *Russian Travelers to Constantinople in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Washington, D.C., 1984), 139, 179.

[157] Ibid., 138–39, 224–25.

[158] *BHG* 500; ed. Lemerle, I, p. 67.14–17. See the comments on this passage by Cormack, *Writing in Gold,* 76, 78.

[159] E.g., M. Vickers, "The Stadium at Thessaloniki," *Byzantion* 41 (1971), 347; later literature in Lemerle, op. cit., I, 56 note 4.

[160] Ed. P. Van den Ven, *La Légende de S. Spyridon, évêque de Trimithonte,* Bibliothèque du Muséon 33 (Louvain, 1953), 88–91, 81*, 144*; the text is cited by N. P. Ševčenko, *Cycles of the Life of St. Nicholas in Byzantine Art,* Ph.D. dissertation (Columbia University, 1973), esp. 20–21, and note 35, pointing out the linguistic similarities with the *Miracula S. Demetrii.*

[161] *BHG* 1366; ed. Sullivan, p. 230.36–44, chap. 67.

[162] *BHG* 263; ed. Veselovskij, *Sbornik* 46 (1889), supp., p. 31.17–19.

[163] *BHG* 370, col. 628B.

[164] *BHG* 1744, p. 12.22.

[165] *Res gestae,* 16.10.9.

[166] *BHG* 99; ed. M. Bonnet, *AnalBoll* 13 (1894), p. 357.21–29.

St. Pankratios of Taormina to silence some obstreperous demons who inhabited an idol of carved stone.[167] Likewise, Christian masons made use of crosses when they wished to neutralize images of pagan deities whose temples had been converted into churches. At the temple of Isis at Philae, for example, a relief of the goddess flanking the entrance of the north pylon was deliberately defaced in the sixth century by having a cross carved over her head (Fig. 34).[168]

A substantially different legend concerning a statue is contained in Andrew's Acta. Here a marvelous marble icon of Andrew is mentioned, which completely resembled his holy image (ἰδέα); the statue had an inscription carved during his lifetime. Some Iconoclasts in the reign of [Constantine V] Kopronymos tried to destroy "this apostolic and revered icon," but in vain.[169] This marble "icon" of Andrew is also mentioned in another vita.[170]

Precious objects, large and small, appear time and again in saints' lives, usually only named, not described. In the house of Philaretos there was an ancient "ivory (ἐλεφαντίνη) table" covered with gold; it was round and so big that thirty-six persons could sit at it.[171] Holy vessels are naturally mentioned; for example, St. Bartholomew is said to have built a church of the Virgin beautifully adorned with icons, holy vessels, and curtains.[172] Reliquaries, also, are sometimes described. Thus Michael III is said in the Vita of Theodore of Edessa to have ordered the production of a golden *thēkē* decorated with precious stones and pearls. The hagiographer adds that the reliquary, containing particles of the life-giving cross, was supplied with a golden key.[173] We learn further that the *thēkē* was brilliantly adorned, had an image (ἐκτύπωμα) of the Lord's countenance (χαρακτήρ), and was placed in a box ornamented with gold.[174]

The object described in Theodore's vita has certain features in common with the Fieschi-Morgan reliquary in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which originally contained fragments of the True Cross, and which has recently been dated to the first half of the ninth century (Fig. 35).[175] The Fieschi-Morgan reliquary is a box of gilded silver, with ten compartments for relics inside, arranged in and around the outline of a double-armed cross. The top of the cover bears an enameled image of the crucified Christ. There is a lock which is probably a later addition. A golden key from such a casket has, however, survived, and is now in the Menil collection in Houston. This key originally was attached to a ring which is presently at Dumbarton Oaks; its bezel bears the monogram of one "Panaretus," who, it has been suggested, is possibly the same individual as a Panaretus identified as "imperial curator" on a ninth-century lead sealing.[176]

In the story of Theodore of Edessa, the reliquary was a gift from the emperor to Theodore's master, the "king of the Persians," Muawiyah, who had been converted to Christianity. A parallel case, of a True-Cross reliquary sent from Constantinople as a diplomatic gift, may be represented by a wooden box from the treasury of the Sancta Sanctorum in the Vatican (Fig. 36). It is decorated with Byzantine paintings executed in a tenth-century style. The reliquary is apparently mentioned in an inventory of the treasury made in the twelfth century.[177] On the top of its lid is a painting of the crucified Christ, while inside the box is a cavity for the relics in the shape of a double-armed cross. Beneath the lower arm of this cross-shaped cavity are paintings of Sts. Peter and Paul. Even though Peter and Paul played an important role in the legend of Constantine's conversion,[178] Constantine and Helena would normally occupy such a position in association with the True Cross in Byzantine art. The substitution of the Roman saints Peter and Paul in this case suggests that the box may have been made in Constantinople specifically for presentation to a pope.[179]

Occasionally the saints' lives give details of the prices of reliquaries. For example, the Life of St. Pankratios, the bishop of Taormina in Sicily, which was composed perhaps in the eighth century, tells

[167] K. Doukakes, ed., *Megas synaxaristes, Ioulios* (Athens, 1893), p. 115. On the role of the cross in Byzantine life, see, among others, H. Hunger, *Reich der neuen Mitte* (Graz, 1965), 182–84.

[168] P. Nautin, "La conversion du temple de Philae en église chrétienne," *CahArch* 17 (1967), 1–43, esp. 24.

[169] *BHG* 100, p. 317.21–28.

[170] *BHG* 102; ed. PG 120, col. 220AB.

[171] *BHG* 1511z, p. 137.30–31; see also *BHG* 1512, p. 75.17–19.

[172] *BHG* 233, col. 481C.

[173] *BHG* 1744, pp. 89.26–90.2.

[174] Ibid., p. 92.2–15.

[175] Kartsonis, *Anastasis*, 94–123, figs. 24a–i.

[176] M. C. Ross, *Catalogue of the Byzantine and Early Mediaeval Antiquities in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection*, II, *Jewelry, Enamels, and Art of the Migration Period* (Washington, D.C., 1965), 81, no. 109, pl. 59; G. Vikan and J. Nesbitt, *Security in Byzantium: Locking, Sealing, and Weighing* (Washington, D.C., 1980), 5, fig. 9.

[177] F. E. Hyslop, Jr., "A Byzantine Reliquary of the True Cross from the Sancta Sanctorum," *ArtB* 16 (1934), 333–40, esp. 339, figs. 1–3.

[178] See note 48 above.

[179] Hyslop, op. cit., 338–39; R. Cormack, "Painting after Iconoclasm," in *Iconoclasm*, ed. A. Bryer and J. Herrin (Birmingham, 1977), 147–63, esp. 151–53, fig. 34.

us that his father bought a True-Cross reliquary in the form of a cross for 500 nomismata from some merchants of Jerusalem. It was made of gold, adorned with precious stones, and was enclosed in a cedar box equipped with a lock. It appears that this same cross was later used by the saint to defend his town from attack by pagans; when it was put out on the ramparts, it emitted a light which blinded the besieging soldiers, so that they started to kill each other instead of the defenders.[180]

The saints' lives also mention the embellishment of book covers with precious materials. In the Vita of John Kalybites we read about a jeweler who adorned a Gospel book with precious stones and pearls. The function of this decoration was not liturgical, but educational. It was commissioned by wealthy parents who wished to encourage their schoolchild in his studies, "so that not only the interior contents of the Gospel book would arouse him to desire, but also the beauty of the exterior fittings would urge him to greater desire." The ruse worked: "taking the Gospel book, John carried it away and learned it thoroughly with great desire."[181] It may be noted that the price of the book's embellishments is given by the biographer as 500 nomismata,[182] the same sum as was asked for St. Pankratios' reliquary, even though the book performed no miracle, unless it was to increase a boy's eagerness to study. In the Vita of Lazarus Galesiotes the cost of a presumably unadorned Gospel book is given as a mere 12 nomismata.[183]

Probably the most significant information related to illuminated book production is to be found in the Vita of Ignatios. This passage is well known and has been translated by C. Mango;[184] the author, Niketas Paphlagon, accused Photios of preparing two luxurious volumes adorned with gold, silver, and silken cloth and containing caricatures that ridiculed Patriarch Ignatios; they represented Ignatios in colored paintings made by Gregory Asbestas, metropolitan of Syracuse; "this brave man," notes Niketas, "was also an artist, ζωγράφος, to top his other vices."[185] As other scholars have observed, the visual invective employed against the patriarch may have been similar to the miniatures of the ninth-century Chludov Psalter.[186] In his paintings Gregory Asbestas compared Ignatios to the devil and to Simon the Sorcerer, just as in the Psalter there are miniatures and legends identifying the Iconoclasts with these characters. Folio 51v, for example, depicts John the Grammarian with the long bristling hair of a devil, trampled under the feet of Nikephoros, beside an inscription identifying him as "John, the second Simon and Iconoclast" (Fig. 37).

VI. Epilogue

The material collected in the preceding pages has a double significance. In the first place, it furnishes some facts that would have remained unknown were it not for the "humble hagiographers" with their curiosity toward elements of reality—works of art are named and described (if briefly), their locations indicated, their prices mentioned, and so on. But besides this, hagiographers tell us how the Byzantines perceived their monuments, especially with respect to their function. The saints' lives tend to give us a different view of Byzantine art from the *ekphraseis*. The *ekphraseis* are more concerned with the *formal* qualities of images, with features of style and iconography and how those features conveyed the Christian story and dogma. But the saints' lives are more concerned with the *power* of images and with their abilities to work on behalf of their beholders. If the *ekphraseis* give us the "what," the saints' lives are more concerned with the "why" and the "when." We do not find there many long descriptions, but there is plenty of information about why images were made and valued, and when the Byzantines turned to them for help. Thus each type of text gives life to Byzantine art in a different way: the *ekphraseis* because they set out to describe the works vividly, and the saints' lives because they show the images interacting with people in Byzantine society.

[180] *BHG* 1410a; ed. A. N. Veselovskij, pp. 74, 108. See A. Frolow, *La relique de la Vraie Croix* (Paris, 1961), 214, no. 84.

[181] *BHG* 868; ed. O. Lampsides, "Batikanoi kodikes periechontes ton bion hagiou Ioannou tou Kalybitou," Ἀρχ.Πόντ. 28 (1966), pp. 3–36, esp. 6.37–7.10.

[182] Ibid., p. 7.6–7.

[183] *BHG* 979, col. 514F.

[184] C. Mango, *The Art of the Byzantine Empire, 312–1453: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1972), 191–92.

[185] *BHG* 817; ed. PG 105, cols. 540C–541C.

[186] A. Grabar, *L'Iconoclasme byzantin*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1984), 225–27, 243, 284–86; Cormack, "Painting after Iconoclasm," 160.

Appendix

Saints' Lives Mentioned in the Article and Their Tentative Dating

Andrew, apostle (1st c.). His Acts, by Epiphanios, are probably of the 9th c. Another version, ascribed to Niketas Paphlagon (late 9th–early 10th c.), must have been compiled sometime later.

Andrew in the Tribunal ("in Crisi") (8th c.?). His Life must have been written before the 10th c. when it was reworked by Symeon Metaphrastes.

Antony II Kauleas, patriarch of Constantinople (893–901). The dates of his hagiographer, Nikephoros, are unknown.

Artemios, dux of Egypt in 360. His Miracles were produced in the mid-7th century.

Athanasios of Athos (d. ca. 1000). His two vitae were written soon after his death.

Barbara, a legendary figure, allegedly lived at the end of the 3rd or the beginning of the 4th century. Her *passio* was included in Metaphrastes' collection (late 10th c.).

Bartholomew of Grottaferrata (d. ca. 1055). His Life was a work of Luke, the abbot of Grottaferrata (second half of the 11th c.).

Basil of Caesarea, the Great (d. 379). The pseudo-Amphilochian Life of Basil is variously dated from the 6th c. to ca. 800. A contemporary oration on his life was written by his brother, Gregory of Nyssa.

Basil the Younger (d. 26 March 944). His Vita was written by his contemporary, the layman Gregory.

Constantine the Great (324–337). His Vita was written by Eusebios of Caesarea soon after the emperor's demise. Numerous legends appeared later, around the 9th c. The story of his conversion was treated also in the Life of Pope Sylvester (q.v.).

Constantine the Jew was a contemporary of Basil I (867–886) and Leo VI (886–912). His anonymous biographer probably lived a generation later.

David, Symeon, and George of Lesbos lived at the end of the 8th and the first half of the 9th century. Their Vita seems to have been composed ca. 863–865.

Demetrios of Thessaloniki was executed, according to legend, by Maximian (286–305). His earlier Miracles were written by John, archbishop of Thessaloniki, produced ca. 606–620, and by an anonymous author at the end of the 7th century.

Elias Speleotes probably died in 960, and his anonymous Life was produced by the end of the 10th century.

George, a legendary saint, was, according to some stories, executed under Diocletian (286–305). His *passio* originates not later than the 5th century, but his Miracles are later, some probably of the 12th century.

Germanos I, patriarch of Constantinople (715–730), died before 742(?). His Vita is probably of the 11th century.

Gordios, a victim of the persecutions of Licinius (308–324), was eulogized by Basil of Caesarea in the 4th century.

Gregory of Dekapolis (d. 842). His Life is assumed to come from the pen of Ignatios the Deacon (9th c.) by such authorities as I. Ševčenko and C. Mango, but W. Wolska-Conus expressed some doubts concerning his authorship.

Gregory the Illuminator (ca. 240–ca. 332), an Armenian saint. His Life (of the 5th c.) survives in a Greek translation ascribed to Agathangelos.

Ignatios, patriarch of Constantinople (847–858, 867–877). His hagiographer was Niketas Paphlagon (end of the 9th–beginning of the 10th c.).

Irene, hegoumene of the convent of Chrysobalanton, a contemporary of Basil I (867–886). Her anonymous hagiographer knew Basil II (976–1025) and probably worked in the early 11th century.

James, the brother of Christ (1st c.). His Vita was included in Metaphrastes' collection (late 10th c.).

John Kalybites (5th c.). One of his vitae has been wrongly ascribed to John of Damascus. At any rate, the manuscript tradition goes back to the 9th century. A Latin version, a translation by Anastasius Bibliothecarius, contains a preface dated 868.

John of Damascus (d. mid-8th c.). His life, sometimes in conjunction with that of Kosmas of Jerusalem, was described in several vitae, among others by John Merkouropoulos, patriarch of Jerusalem, an enigmatic figure, who lived in the 12th century.

Kosmas and Damianos, martyrs under Diocletian (286–305), the Anargyroi (those who healed without silver). The collection of miracles worked by them is probably of the 6th century.

Lazaros Galesiotes (of Mount Galesios) (d. 1053). His Life was written by his pupil Gregory.

Lesbian brothers: see David, Symeon, and George of Lesbos.

Luke the Younger, Steiriotes (d. 953). His Vita was compiled after 961 and inserted into Metaphrastes' collection.

Marcianus of Syracuse, a disciple of the apostle Peter (1st c.). His enkomion is probably of the 8th century.

Mary of Egypt. Her chronology cannot be established, but hagiographers of the 7th century were aware of her. Her Life is included in Metaphrastes' collection (late 10th c.).

Mary the Virgin, the Theotokos. The so-called Narratio de imagine Deiparae Romana, a collection of miracles worked by her icons, should probably be dated in the 11th century.

Maria the Younger of Vize (d. ca. 903). Her anonymous Life is the work of an 11th-century writer rather than a contemporary.

Michael the Synkellos (d. 846). The editor of his Life, F. Šmit, is inclined to consider his anonymous biographer as Michael's contemporary, even though the writer confesses that he did not meet the saint.

Nicholas of Stoudios (d. 868). His anonymous Vita was written by a monk of Stoudios approximately forty years after the saint's death.

Nikon the Metanoeite (d. early 11th c.). The time of the composition of his Vita is problematic: it is unclear whether it consists of two sections, one written before 1025 and another in 1148, or was written as a whole.

Pankratios of Taormina, a legendary disciple of the apostle Peter (1st c.). One of the *passiones* dedicated to him is ascribed to Theodore of Stoudios (8th c.), another to the saint's pupil Evagrios; in fact, it is pseudonymous.

Patapios of Constantinople, whose chronology (probably the 6th or 7th c.) has not yet been established. Andrew of Crete (ca. 660–ca. 740) dedicated a laudation to him.

Paul of Latros (d. 955). His anonymous Life was written soon after his death. Another Life was attributed to Symeon Metaphrastes.

Philaretos the Merciful (Almoner) (d. 792). His Vita was written by his grandson Niketas of Amnia in 822.

Sabas the Younger of Sicily (10th c.). His hagiographer was Orestes of Jerusalem, who died ca. 1005.

Spyridon, bishop of Trimithous, Cyprus (d. after 346). Theodore of Paphos delivered an enkomion on Spyridon in 655.

Stephen Sabaites (of Mar-Saba in Palestine) (d. 794). His pupil Leontios compiled his biography.

Stephen the Younger of Constantinople, was executed by Constantine V (741–775) ca. 765. Stephen the Deacon wrote his Vita in 807.

Sylvester, pope (314–335). The dating of the Greek version of his Life is a matter of debate—the second half of the 8th century may be a plausible date.

Tarasios, patriarch of Constantinople (784–806). His Vita was written by Ignatios the Deacon probably soon after 843.

Theodora of Thessaloniki died in 892. Her Translation and probably her Vita were written by the klerikos Gregory in the early 10th century—according to E. Kurtz, the editor of the dossier on Theodora, before 904.

Theodore Graptos (Incised) (d. 844). His biography is included in Metaphrastes' collection (late 10th c.).

Theodore of Edessa, supposedly of the mid-9th century. His Vita is a hagiographical romance probably written in the 10th century. The author claims to have been Basil of Emesa, the saint's nephew, but the claim is fictitious.

Theodore of Sykeon (d. 613). His Vita seems to have been written by his disciple George after 641.

Theodore Stratelates (General), allegedly executed under Licinius (308–324), did not appear in hagiographical literature before the 9th century. The author of his earliest enkomion, Niketas Paphlagon, distinguished him from Theodore Teron (q.v.), but in fact Stratelates' biography is modeled on that of Teron.

Theodore of Stoudios (monastery in Constantinople) (759–826). There are at least three versions of his biography, none of which was produced before 855. The author of one of them was Michael of Stoudios of whom nothing is known; another version is sometimes ascribed to Theodore Daphnopates (10th c.).

Theodore Teron (Foot Soldier), an enigmatic martyr, allegedly executed at the beginning of the 4th century and praised by Gregory of Nyssa, and with more detail by Chrysippos of Jerusalem (5th c.). In the 11th century, John Mauropous produced an enkomion of Theodore and a description of his feast.

Theophylaktos of Nikomedeia (d. before 820). His Vita was compiled after 843 by a man also called Theophylaktos; the precise date of his work is unknown.

Thomais of Lesbos. The chronology of her life is unknown. The anonymous hagiographer mentions Romanos II (959–963) and must have lived after this emperor, but it is unclear how long after.

Dumbarton Oaks